264 girls, on the whole, getting less than the boys. Young girls may eat at their
594 father's table, but after the age of twelve, sex dichotomy is established in
[562] food, and the female members of the family eat afterwards.

[788] The meal usually starts with the invocation, 'In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful', and ends by every participant's saying 'Praise to God'. The father, as the disciplinarian, watches to see if any child shows signs of greed or wasting food by dropping it, whereupon he has to ask him to control himself, saying, 'Oh boy! Why don't you say in the name of God?' If the child continues to be careless or rude, he might be hit or given less share of the meat or his share might be given to one of his more disciplined brothers. Generally speaking, children are expected to be silent and obedient at meals. A child's complaint about food is not tolerated as such a complaint removes 'baraka'.

The end of more pretentious meals, especially on festival occasions,
796 always witnesses the family's remembrance of its deceased members, when
769 the father asks all the members present to recite the 'Fatiha' from the Koran for the souls of the dead. The eve of the two religious feasts Ramadan and Adha is called Rahamat—mercy, where practically every family prepares a good meal at the end of which they ask God to have mercy on their deceased. On the morning of the feast-days, the womenfolk make special wheat bread, which they take to eat or distribute among children or whoever is present at the cemetery, asking them to read the Fatiha for their dead.

574 Hospitality is shown by offering an excessive amount of food. In case of guests, the table or tray is arranged with loaves of bread all round, no gaps being left. The guests should be made to feel that there is an abundance of food and 'ghamoos', and should be encouraged all the time to eat by saying, 'Go ahead; do your best; try more of this', and so on. The etiquette of hospitality is that while the guest must show a kind of restraint, the host must be always persuading him to carry on. The host must also apologize for not being able to provide the right quantity and quality of food for the occasion, saying, 'May our affection cover up the deficiency in the meal'.

264 There is no doubt that the partaking of food is one of the main forces
621 bringing about or reinforcing relationship between members of this com-
[628] munity and between them and other neighbouring villages. 'There is bread and salt between us' is a strong binding moral force between two people or two families, and to betray bread and salt is almost a sin, which is punishable either in this world or in the next. The commensalism of the clan-meals in the breaking of the daily fast during the whole month of Ramadan, breakfast on the mornings of the two feasts and on funeral days is a reminder of, and contributor to, group solidarity. Boys who carry their fathers' trays of food are usually exchanged, and sent to eat at another man's tray.

[241] At the beginning of the fresh harvest, a special meal is provided by

neighbours in the field, where a small lamb or goat is killed in the field [269 62]
and cooked, on this occasion, by the men, while the women send the [241]
children with bread to the farm for the meal. It must be noticed that on
this occasion, as well as at most communal meals, meat is served in one
dish and is divided by one member or two amongst the participants. Such
a meal will be followed by somebody standing up to invoke God's blessing [788] ●
—'baraka'—in the new harvest, as well as mercy on the deceased ancestors.
Indeed Robertson Smith's remark is applicable to this community. 'The [572]
act of eating and drinking together is the solemn and stated expression of
the fact that all who share the meal are brethren and that the duties of
friendship and brotherhood are implicitly acknowledged in their common
act.'[1]

To sum up, the village is a community of small landowners, who, irrespective 621
of the size of their holdings, consider their land to be the basis of 423
their livelihood and security and to be a possession for which they have
great emotional attachment. There is no appreciable functional differentiation 463
in occupations; hence, the amount of skill and knowledge required
for livelihood is almost identical. In spite of a great deal of economic
self-sufficiency in the peasant or rural community, and of reliance on 439
subsistence crops, the inhabitants are still dependent on outside forces for
the price of their crops and for the sale of manufactured goods and
textiles. Moreover, with a population pressure, more and more of the 369
village members have reluctantly left to seek livelihood in towns and [464]
cities and to take up work as caretakers and domestic servants. On their
return to the village, such groups of people bring with them some of the
town atmosphere, considering themselves 'masrawia' (been to the city).
They sometimes consider themselves more refined, and are usually elegantly
dressed, even adopting a different accent. Such mobility is definitely
beginning to challenge in some measure the traditional stability and conventional
behaviour.

In spite of the increasingly impinging forces of city life and the admiration 182
of the villagers for city ways, the small landowners still uphold and
maintain the vested common interest in favour of the traditional ways of
life, symbolized in the dignity of farm-work compared to other occupations,
in the importance of family unity and honour of ancestry, in the religious
ethic based on contentment and abhorrence of pleasure-seeking, and in
social sensitivity to shame-provoking situations.

Furthermore, the feeling of equalitarianism is so striking in this community [554]
that any schematic class-division is very difficult to apply to its
social structure. Here again, irrespective of their landholdings, they all [262]
eat from their hand produce consisting mainly of bread and the same
varieties of home-grown vegetables; they live in similar dwellings, built [342]
of stone, dried mud and palm trunks, constructed by the village masons

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[1] W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*, London, 1894, p. 265.

613 627 two joint families to 'level all the misunderstandings' between them. The dispute had arisen between the two joint families of 'Amareen and Karamsha, both belonging to the 'Amrab clan, Musiab section. Hag Ahmad 'Imran, the head of the first family, asked the Karamsha to lend him one of their camels to carry some maize straw from the field, but his request was refused because they alleged that they had no camels to spare as they were engaged in building a house. On another occasion, Hag Ahmad 'Imran insisted on taking the camel from one of the Karamsha while he was bringing water to be used in the building; people interfered and the matter was settled for the time being. After three days, he made another attempt and slapped the camel-driver, 'Othman, on the face, cursing his people. 'Othman, the offended man, could not retaliate as Hag Ahmad was the senior man of his family and older than he, and it is 'impolite' according to Arab traditions to slap such a man. People immediately gathered to settle this affair temporarily and prevent any further complications. Then Hag Ahmad's son came on the spot and started to insult 'Othman (who was his brother-in-law) and 'Othman, finding his equal, stood up to the challenge, but people intervened. The dispute, in spite of its temporary ending, had left 'something in the souls of the two houses'.

The 'residue in the souls' came up to the surface when the pilgrims from the clan came back from Mecca and had to be invited by the heads of the clan. The 'Amareen invited the Karamsha to co-operate, but the latter declined. In the meantime, it happened that a member of the Karamsha offered his help for the occasion but was refused by the 'Amareen. This added fuel to the fire and the situation between the two families became tense.

Deputations and mediators went between the two families to fix an 'Arab council' for arbitration. A respected and pious man suggested the family of Badawab for the purpose, but the Karamsha objected on the grounds that the former house was closely related to the 'Amareen. Then the arbitration was raised to the clan level and the Hasaballab clan from 'Onab section (to which neither side belonged) was suggested and this was accepted by both sides. On the appointed evening, the adult members of the two houses came to the Hasaballab guest house, where they were received and tea was served.

The meeting started by the Hasaballab head clansman reciting 'Wahhidouh ya Gamaa—Say that God is one, O gathering'. Everybody [788] present answered, 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet'. Then the chosen head of the Hasaballab asked the Karamsha, 'What is your story?' 'Abd-el-Gid, the head of the Karamsha, stated, 'We are claiming duties from the 'Amareen'. Then the head of the Hasaballab proposed that after sitting together in their guest house, the two sides should reconcile 'on the white and the reading of Fatiha', meaning that they should root out the past misunderstandings, and should forget all

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classified into believers and non-believers, on the basis of the Moslem [771]
faith, and they are hardly aware of concepts like race or class.

Silwa is to be considered basically as a folk community to the extent that human relations are not only of the personal, face to face type, but also familial. Social behaviour and mutual obligations are built upon the family relationship pattern, with regard to age, sex and status. Family relations are extended outwards to include the whole range of the community, and kinship bonds are the moral force behind village cohesion and group solidarity. Marriage, for instance, has its preferential bias towards cousins and relatives, and is an undertaking that implies the bringing together of two families. [582]

Together with the emphasis on the family, one adds, to specify the degree of folkhood in Silwa community, such items of behaviour as the observation of patriarchal authority and respect relationship between the old and the young, and the reciprocal rights and duties between kinsfolk.

Moreover, sanctity and sacred sanctions lie at the foundation of a great 771
deal of human activities and behaviour in the village; and ideally the 626
sacred not only prevails over the profane, but sanctions and to some extent directs it. According to the villagers' view, 'life on this earth is like a farm, the harvest of which will be reaped in the next world'. Social acts and value judgment are grouped into two main religious categories: haram (forbidden) and halal (allowed), two words which have a distinctively religious flavour. Alongside the sanction of 'ar (social shaming) the notion of haram is another strong sanction for condemning a person who violates any of the prescriptions of the Koran or any moral or social norm.

To introduce acts of piety or holy symbols into everyday life is the best 771
means of producing 'baraka', to mention God's name at the beginning of 788
the meal, to thank Him at the end of it, to elicit His help on travelling, to count by saying 'God is one, second to none, three, the Caliphs are four'—as such religious ritual invokes holiness—'baraka'. To engage in Koran reading and reciting and to be able to quote the sacred language of the Koran, the Tradition and the sayings of the pious ancestors, is a sublime and ennobling occupation. It is not surprising that the villagers' spirit is always captivated by the story of the woman who, whenever asked about any matter, always gave an answer by quoting from the Koran.[1]

Cleanliness is envisaged mainly, not in terms of absence of dirt, but as 771
the removal or absence of things that bring about religious impurity. To be 783
in a state of valid ablutions is cleanliness, while the opposite is filthiness—'nagasa'. Attendance to such matters is more important than being clean or dirty in the secular, hygienic sense. Lustration as prescribed by the Koran, [514]
to wash one's private parts after evacuation, renders one clean and ready for saying one's prayers and is necessary for reading, reciting, or even touching the Koran. After sexual intercourse, husband and wife are enjoined to take a bath in a prescribed way, otherwise they are unclean. [833]

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[1] See Appendix V for the full text of the story.

1:Ammar E,1-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

FOLK LIFE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE VILLAGE

771 Notions connected with life and death are, on the whole, mixed up with
761 religion. To die on holy days, such as Fridays or in the month of Ramadan,
[796] is a sign of God's blessing.

Sanctity shows itself also in status and rank and their role in the com-
771 munity. According to the villagers, the 'ashraf' (people of distinguished
descent being related to the Prophet) have a better chance of salvation
554 than others, a notion which, of course, satisfies the villagers' ego as they
[783] consider themselves descendants of the Prophet. The persistence of the
religious prerogatives of the 'ashraf' goes to show that the central concep-
[779] tion of Islam in the equality of all believers has not entirely supplanted the
Arab reverence for distinguished genealogy.

771 The villagers' attitude of respect for religious men is based on two prin-
ciples. The first is that of knowledge of Koranic studies, combined with
792 observation of religious duties; the second is derived from hereditary piety,
as recognized piety is believed to be handed from father to son. The
example of the two pious men acknowledged and venerated as such by the
villagers is perhaps the best illustration. One of these two pious sheikhs
[776] is the son of the villagers' deceased saint around whose shrine the tombs
of the villagers' cemetery is spread. As this sheikh does not live in the
[778] village, he frequently comes to it either for an ordinary visit, for taking
[764] part in settling serious disputes between individuals or families, or to
collect his annual custom of crops offered to him by the villagers during
harvest time. During his stay he moves from one guest house to another
as the guest of a clan or a family which endeavours to provide hospitality
for him and thus win his approval. In return, the sheikh is requested to
● [788] write charms, or to bless water, or to read over a sick person, and thus
secure his 'baraka'.[1]

The piety of the other religious man is based also on the fact that he is
[795] the grandson of a man who was one of the favourite disciples of the chief
founder of the Nakshbadia mystic sect. His grandfather is reputed to have
done miraculous deeds and had composed mystic verses usually recited
amongst the members of the sect. His piety is also based on the grounds
that he studied at al-Azhar Mosque and thus he is considered to be well
versed in Koranic studies. It was because of his piety that he gained most
of the votes in Silwa, when he stood as a candidate for the Parliament as
mentioned earlier.

It is also recognized that people who know the sacred book by heart
should be venerated as the carriers of knowledge, and many people regard
them as possessed of 'baraka'. In Arab councils, religious men are always
[623] included, and their decisions are usually respected.

771 Moreover, the main events of life and death have their religious signifi-
cance or at least their sanction. It is in the Prophet's tradition to celebrate
[553] the naming ceremony, to circumcise children, and to get them married.

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[1] This sheikh died during my field work and a delegation from the village went to his
[581] village in condolence.

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954

MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

177 good as the village reciter, this being justified on the grounds that the 369 'village girl is always one-eyed'. Introduction of cash crops like sugar-cane 554 and cotton has caught on for the same reasons as landlords who can afford to live in the city grow such crops. [248] Emulation of city standards for social prestige is obvious in the example of those few people who white-washed [249] their houses mainly on the outside but seldom inside, in contrast to the dark grey colour of mud, the ordinary house coating. [342] The same whitewash with inscriptions from the Koran concerning pilgrimage, crude paintings of camels, and mahmal procession also form the outside [788] decoration of the houses of pilgrims made immediately after their return from Mecca.

While some articles of men's wear or some parts of their speech have 177 been affected by city ways, women's dress and language have hardly been 369 affected at all. This is partly due to their relative restriction of movement and travel compared with men. On some occasion, there was a commotion [562] in the village concerning the spread of city headgear among the women. [291] This led to their nightly itinerary to fill their jars from the Nile being stopped for a while, as the men complained that women made it an occasion for displaying their colourful headgear.

The villagers appreciate the fact that city dwellers are much more inclined to mind their own business and engage in no gossip. [521] Their attitude towards gossip is, however, paradoxical. It is considered sinful to talk [626] about somebody behind his back; the Koran condemns it, and the Prophetic Tradition warns against it as 'gossip eats up the good deeds as the fire eats up wood'. Much of the village preacher's advice in the Friday sermon is on the avoidance of gossip and the use of the human tongue which could be like the scorpion's tail. Yet on the other hand, the villagers in their formal and informal gatherings occupy themselves with talking about the doings, the problems, the quarrels, and the general business of other people. They will tell you that they are engaged in just having a mouthful of words, or just chewing the cud. It is well known that gossip is almost an institution in rural areas, partly informative, partly interpretive, and on the whole functions as a means of social control and a medium [208] for the formation of public opinion. In this connection, my informant Ali told me that townspeople have more scope for piety, as the occasions for gossip do not arise as among the people of Silwa.

One of the main things that a small number of enlightened villagers are aware of is the fact that in the cities people can find more religious enlightenment as to what are the principles of pure religion in distinction [771] from religion mixed with pre-Islamic customs (Jahilyia), which they think are prevalent in the village. On enquiring about examples of the supremacy of the chances of the city dwellers over the villagers in this respect, most [788] of the information elicited concerned religious ritual. Ali, as well as other persons, stated that city people know how to perform their ablutions better, how to say their prayers in a more acceptable way, and have no mourning

177 customs like the people in Silwa. The visiting priest who comes yearly to 369 the village is certainly welcome on his arrival, and people flock to him for advice on religious matters. On attending one of these meetings, the writer 788 was struck by the number of questions that those present put to him con- 792 cerning the details of prayers, e.g. whether one lifts his hand up to his shoulder or up to his ears, how one sits on after prostration, what one might say before and after prayers. Other questions that arose were queries about whether certain sayings or deeds were considered to be religiously approved or disapproved, how and to whom one would make a sacrifice oath, whether visiting saints' tombs is a good thing or not, and so forth.

Village life, on the whole, whether in religious or social spheres, is very 796 ritually and ceremonially conscious, and almost invulnerable on this level. Greeting, hospitality, eating, praying, exchange of social obligations, cir- 579 cumcision, marriage, and dozens of items of life are shrouded with ritual and traditional prescriptions. My informant, Mahmoud, told me that after a sermon given by a preacher coming from the city, who told the 764 villagers that their customs practised on the death of a person were non-Islamic, they took a vow not to practise them any more. Yet the adherence to the oath was made for some six months, after which people gradually relapsed to their traditional ways, with the only exception that women were allowed to follow the deceased as far as the southern end of the village instead of going on to the cemetery as had been the practice hitherto.

753 The extent of social change on the folkhood of the village could be also examined in the villagers' ideas about sickness and disease which are mixed with ritual and religious beliefs. Disease, it is supposed, can be caused either by failure to fulfil some religious ritual or ceremony, such as a financially able man not performing his pilgrimage, or the failure to give the promised offerings to a saint, or providing a naming ceremony for a 756 new-born baby. If saints are suspected as the cause of the disease, usually a woman known to be the guardian of that particular saint, or upon whom saints descend, would be consulted to tell whether the family has broken or forgotten a sacrificial custom. If no special saint has been offended, 755 then bread could be specially baked and distributed as a 'karama' amongst people after the Friday prayer, asking God to relieve the sick.

754 Sickness can also be caused by the evil eye, and in such cases a learned man is asked to recite verses from the Koran or write a charm (higab) to 751 be worn by the sick person as a prophylactic safeguard as well as a means of treatment. Certain diseases like paralysis are believed to be caused by the evil red wind emanating from the touch of jinn; an epileptic is also a 776 person who is mounted and obsessed by jinn who usually haunt deserted places, wells, and high spots in the mountains. Curiously enough, tuberculosis is believed to be caused by pretence and social conceit.

Moreover, a sickness is considered as God's test for the endurance and patience of the faithful. As the faithful are always exposed to affliction, their faith in God should never be shaken, and hence their endurance of

843 ing her husband's finances, especially in her demand for food rarities, as
[626] 'a woman permanently in the craving period'. The pregnant woman's
desires also provide a testing ground for neighbourliness and reciprocity when she sends one of her family to 'borrow' something for her. Neighbours are expected to meet such requirements if they have been approached, while at the same time they are usually requested not to spread the news. This could also be regarded as an occasion to announce the expected baby to the neighbours, who might be asked to help at a later stage.

In the 'craving period' the wife asserts her desires over her husband, and
[593] with it goes an assertion of the matrilineal side over the patrilineal
authority. The gifts and attention centred around the pregnant woman by the husband and his people indicate some cultural balance and provide a psychological outlet to the normal husband-wife pattern of relationship. The ideology of a patriarchal community has to concede a certain amount of tolerance for the satisfaction of its fervent sentiment towards the offspring.

Apart from the whims that should be satisfied, the craving woman is warned against showing fear or expressing ridicule or criticism for anybody, as the embryo might be moulded in the image of the person feared, ridiculed or criticized. On the other hand, she is encouraged to show appreciation for children. On seeing a child in its mother's arms, the craving woman expresses her admiration for it, whereupon the suckling mother would wish her to have one like it or better.

By the middle of the fifth lunar month, when the woman's abdomen usually becomes large, it is taken to mean that the child is well developed, and that the mother can resume her normal work. Relatives and neighbours can come and visit her, wishing her to bear a boy, or whatever God wills! Up to the ninth month, nothing more significant happens except
the preparation of the proper food for the forthcoming event. Food
[431] presents, especially from the patrilineal side, are sent to the home, e.g.
molasses, clarified butter and sugar. The women members may invite a
[789] fortune-teller to give them some tidings, and dreams might be told also
in connection with the expected baby.

The extent of the desire of women for children can be gauged by the
842 multifarious devices to which they resort to induce pregnancy. A woman
who does not bear children is called 'akir'—one who literally 'kills' her offspring; and the woman who has stopped bearing is referred to as 'mushahira'—being 'bound' or literally affected (in some way) by the moon. The following methods are used as aids to pregnancy in both cases:

Crossing the Nile in a boat is one of the ways of 'freeing the chaining' of a woman. It symbolizes the fact that she is moving from one state to another. She might visit a faraway saint, taking some food with her and
[788] filling her dish with some of the sand from the saint's grave to sprinkle
over her body on her return.

553 acquiring new things, e.g. building a new house, reaping new harvest, 782 obtaining new land. Though there is no formal ceremony in Artas (Palestine) for the naming of the child, Hilma Granqvist refers to the notion of 'the flowing of the blood' in the same way as believed in Silwa, the purpose being that life redeems life.[1]

782 At other major events of an individual's life, like circumcision, marriage, pilgrimage, completion of memorizing the Koran, the blood must flow to bring about blessing (baraka).

553 However, at the end of the meal, the oldest member present, or a religious man, asks what the child's name is, and on being told, such a name would be praised by the meeting. The reading of the 'Fatiha' [788] (similar to the Lord's Prayer) would end the ceremony with prayers for the child's long and happy life.

The name is usually chosen by the parents, and with the first child, the name of the grandfather for a boy, or grandmother for a girl, is frequently decided upon. Granqvist has discussed at great length the significance and implications in choice of names, and it is felt unnecessary to dwell therefore 551 on these points here.[2] In this connection, it is reported as a prophetic tradition that 'the best names are those which are similar to the Prophet's names or indicate the subservience to God'. The whole range of names could be classified into four categories: (1) those similar to the Prophet's names, reported to be thirty-three in number, e.g. Mohammad, Mahmoud, Kamil, Mustafa, Ahmad, Taha, Yaseen; those related to his family either male or female; names of the Well-Guided Caliphs. Examples of names of females connected with the Prophet are: Amina (Prophet's mother), Halima (wet-nurse), Aisha, Khadiga (wives). (2) Names indicating 'Servant of God', and this lends itself to ninety-nine names which are the attributes of God, e.g. Abd-el Rahman (Servant of the Compassionate), Abd-el Rahim (Servant of the Merciful), Abd-el Wahhab (Servant of the Giver). (3) Names of other prophets, e.g. Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), Solaiman (Solomon). (4) Modern names, usually an [369] imitation of the city names, which do not belong to any of the previous categories: Muhsin, Fouad, Nawal, Sabah.

On the whole, the name is usually connected with some meaning or fathering a wish. The writer was told about a certain man in the village whose children used to die during the first year because it was alleged they had attractive names; as a safeguard against this he decided to call his future children by unusual names, e.g. Malaz (pot), Shwal (sack), so that they would not be envied, and thus survive. He appears, according to my informant, to have succeeded thereby in raising children.

553 In contrast with those in Artas in Palestine (the Arab village studied by Granqvist), the names in Silwa are never changed after the ceremony, and it would be considered a great disgrace to do so. This difference is probably

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[1] Hilma Granqvist, *Child Problems among the Arabs*, p. 131.

[2] Ibid., pp. 1–50.

be more attached to his home if his head has first 'fallen into it' at birth 844
(masqat ar-ras).

There is no policy of any kind for limiting birth, either by spacing it 842
out or by practising birth control. Birth control in the modern sense is
unheard of, and in any case it is considered as a religious sin, and deemed
an interference with God's creation.[1] A part of the married male ethos is 831
not to regulate his sex desires, but to give them full play whenever the
need arises. Continence is not a desirable thing for a married man, but to
have sexual intercourse with his wife is a good religious deed (hasana).
One should not counteract sexual desires but rather stimulate them, and 832
hence the various devices such as special food and aphrodisiacs like
hasheesh and opium are resorted to for sexual potency. The writer heard 842
of no woman who has practised any devices to confer sterility on her.

The period of the 'forty days' is enshrouded in a great deal of secrecy
and psychological delicacy. For fear of the evil eye, the influence of the 846
evil spirits, or sterility, the mother should adhere to the rigid system of [754]
food, minimum movement and general seclusion and other taboos. This
is the period in which another woman who wants to become pregnant
might suddenly 'press' on her, and thus she could be hampered or delayed
in her next pregnancy. However, when a visitor comes to the house the
mother covers herself as well as the child and pretends to be feeling rather
uncomfortable, either groaning or suffering from pain. In referring to the
baby, visitors must be careful not to praise it openly, unless they use
the safeguarding phrases such as 'God preserve him' (or her), 'may [788]
the Prophet's blessings be upon him'. On enquiring about the sex of a
child, if it is a boy, his sex is usually hidden at first to be declared
afterwards.

Concerning the child itself, one observes that it is announced and intro- 851
duced in various ways. In the case of a boy, a 'gong' is produced in his
room every morning and every evening; the purpose, as it is believed, is
to make the child brave and not to fear any unexpected shock. Yet the
reaction of the neighbours on hearing the sound is one of recognition that
'the so-and-so's are sounding for their child'.

The naming ceremony in the case of a boy is the second link in the 553
chain of introducing the child to his neighbours and relatives. Actually 851
the name is usually agreed upon before birth, though the ceremony is the
formal occasion for declaring the name. Women have no formal congrega-
tion like the men, but a small portion of food and meat is sent to the homes
of the female relatives. It is to be stressed that very few people have a [562]
naming ceremony for the girls, which is also a male gathering. The motive
behind the girls' ceremony could be regarded as a kind of religious
puritanism to counteract the pre-Islamic sin of burying the girls alive.

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[1] A scholar of al-Azhar told the writer that the Grand Mufti of Egypt recently issued a 'fatwa' permitting the use of contraceptives and sanctioning abortion before the fourth month, that is 'before the child is gifted with a soul'. [778] [84[illegible]] [847]

856 their children as do their older brothers or sisters. They hardly teach or
help the child in its attempts to walk; for instance, if a child trying to walk
falls down, the mother is not supposed to show much anxiety for her
child's discomfiture; she simply has to say: 'You will grow up and have
● [788] more of it', but only after spitting on the ground to ward off the effect of
the evil spirits. There is no baby talk, and when the child starts to babble,
[195] grown-ups usually tease him by examining his capacity to repeat difficult
words, but no deliberate teaching takes place.

854 As to the sleeping posture of infants, there is hardly any stylized way,
as the infant is left to sleep on his mother's lap, on another person's lap,
or on the ground, without any scheduling or worry about its sleeping hours.
Mothers are seen carrying their sleeping infants, either vertically or
horizontally, on going from one place to another. On the whole, the sleeping
habits of children in Silwa are very similar to those of other peasant
societies, where they learn to sleep anywhere and through anything.[1]
513 Older children and adults can be seen asleep outside the house during
the day or the night in seemingly uncomfortable positions or places.

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[1] Margaret Mead, 'The Primitive Child', in Murchison, *Handbook of Child Psychology*, Worcester, Mass., 1931, p. 677.

883

Wana jayi mna al Mas'aeed, 539
wi labis talat jalalaleeb, 533
wi batgallab baihin gilleeb.
Chorus: Gol la abouy in kunt tahwani, gol la abouy.

I was coming from al Masaeed (a neighbouring village)
wearing three garments
in which I was rolling, rolling.
Chorus: Tell my father if you love me, tell my father.

883 799 At this stage of adolescence, boys—especially those who have been to the Kuttab—begin to participate in mosque prayers and show intensified interest in religious practices. They go to Friday prayers, take part in the calling for prayers and the drawing of water from the mosque well for ablutions. A great number of youths also join the mystic order of 'Nakshabandia'; they are called 'Boys of the Path' (awlad attarik), and their headquarters is a room attached to the old mosque of the village. Members of the sect are expected to attend the night prayers ('isha) in the mosque, after which they congregate for reading and listening to mystic verses, followed by telling some of God's attributes silently several times. This is called 'the mystic routine' (ratib). Moreover, on certain occasions, these youths perform collectively the 'Zikr'. The performance of this mystic ritual involves mainly the repetitive uttering of some of God's attributes aloud and in unison. The leader of the 'Zikr', a blind man, stands in the middle of a circle, while youths, and sometimes with them a few married men, will be standing in a circle calling out together one of God's names, e.g. 'Merciful' (Raheem), while swaying their bodies. [788] ● This repetition may go on for about a quarter of an hour or so, to be stopped by the leader who will recite some verses of saints or some 'mawwals'. While the boys are listening to this, they express their approval and admiration, and they may ask for another 'mawwal' from the reciter before they start chanting another of God's names. While those in the circle are repeatedly chanting a name of God, gradually getting into almost a state of ecstasy, the leader in the centre would be clapping his hands and stimulating his boys to carry on by more repetitive chanting. The following are two examples of 'mawwals' sung on such occasions: 883 539

'Ajaby 'ala welaid fi zikr al-Ilah zawwad, 533
elif al-Jalalah, wib salaat annabi t'awwad.
'Ash gadr ma'ash la mal wa la hawwad,
wa la umru jalas yoam ma'ally galbahum sawwad,
lamma mat bayyan karamat la 'affan wa la dawwad.

I admire the boy who has indulged in mentioning God's name,
and accustomed himself to His Glorious name and to prayers for the
Prophet,

876 is to this day judged by the amount of the Koran and the number of
prophetic traditions which he can quote, and the number of proverbs and
maxims he can bring into the argument. It is not surprising then that out
of some twenty learned religious men in the village, five of them are well
known for their perfect memorization of the Koran, two for the memoriza-
793 tion of many poetic verses of the Sheikhs of the Nakhshabandia sect, thus
becoming the leaders of the order in the village, while two others are
799 acknowledged as the most able reciters of verses and charms to ward off
754 the 'evil eye'. From the linguistic point of view, for the speaker to claim
that he knows a great deal about a particular thing, event, or person, is
for him to assert that he 'memorizes it, or him, to the best of his memory'.[1]

779 The writer is inclined to assume that the Islamic culture, or at least as
it is practised in the Silwa community, emphasizes and fosters rote learn-
788 ing, memory, and enumerative procedures. There is abundant evidence
876 of this in the repetitive elements in greetings, in conversation, in the verses
and choruses in folk singing, in the ritual of the mystical orders (zikr), in
the need to know the ninety-nine attributes of God, and the thirty-three
names of the Prophet, and in the traditional way of memorizing the Koran
in the Kuttab. In this connection, MacDonald says, 'Moslem practice
was to repeat aloud until the thing was learnt—that is, by heart. They
had observed, too, that no special thought was called for, only continued
repetition.'[2]

876 In stating that the village culture mainly stimulates memory as the
most important cognitive process one does not necessarily imply that
153 people in the village have good memories. This emphasis on memory
could be related to what Bateson calls the eidos of a culture, meaning by it
that a culture might have a bias for the standardization of the cognitive
aspects of the personality of its participants expressed in their cultural
behaviour.[3] One is tempted here to ask a similar question to that posed
by Bateson himself as to what extent this bias for amassing knowledge is
limited only to a small number of specialists. In attempting an answer, it
must be remembered that the stimulation of a small number of specialists
can react on the culture as a whole; they have set themselves up as the
554 leaders of the village life both in religious and social matters. From this
it is fairly justified to conclude, as Bateson did, that 'the individuals most
affected by the stimulation of memory actually contribute very much more
than their fellows to the elaboration and maintenance of the culture'.[4]

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[1] The equivalent phrase to this in the colloquial language of the village is 'hafdanuh hifd', in classical Arabic 'ahfathuh hiftha'.

[2] MacDonald, *Aspects of Islam*, New York, 1911. The resort to rote learning has been the bane of education in modern schools. Criticisms of students' 'parrot-like' work are abundant in many of the official Government Reports. See E. Claparède, *Rapport Général Présenté au Ministère de l'Instruction Publique*, Cairo, 1929; F. O. Mann, *A Report on Certain Aspects of Egyptian Education*, Cairo, 1929; Ministry of Education, *Report on Secondary Education*, Cairo, 1935.

[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*, p. 220.

[4] Ibid., pp. 226–7.

1:Ammar E. I-5 (1951) 1954

MR13 Fellahin MR13

Silwa

APPENDIX I

159 794 I had to leave and concentrate on memorizing the Koran. After one year I finished the Koran and recited it for my Sheikh Ahmad Mousa to his satisfaction.[1] Then my father offered a "Karama" in the Kuttab, consisting of a meal of wheat bread and meat eaten in the Kuttab by the boys and whoever is present (as one is not supposed to invite persons for a "karama") together with a gift of a white garment to the Sheikh. This was followed by a ceremony called "dorah" (classical "dawrah") going round the village, with sheikhs reciting odes (qasidas) in praise of the Prophet, beating the drum and the tambourine (tar), and followed by other local folk as well as the Kuttab children. On this occasion I wore white [788] clothes; this is a holy practice like that of pilgrims returning from Mecca, who also don white clothes.[2] After this, I stayed in the Kuttab as an "Areef-prefect", repeating the Koran three times during the first year, at the end of which I sat for an examination (oral) set by one of the Ministry of Education inspectors, and on passing it I received a prize of £E2. I remained as an "areef" for three years, teaching the other children, learning the "Munawi mawled"—a rhyming prose as well as poems on the birth of the Prophet, the "matn-al-Ishmawi"—in the Islamic law (Fikh), "Matn al Jawhara" in monotheistic theology (Tawheed), which is in poem 159 form. From the age of nine I had to help my father and older brother in farm work, but I was not pressed to work as my family wished me to devote myself to Koranic studies, and this is one of the things that distinguished me from many other boys in the village. But later in life, especially after my marriage, I had to work harder in the fields. My older brother was responsible for bringing fertilizer from the hill, while my father and myself helped in the other farm tasks such as irrigation, distribution of manure, and harvesting.

'In 1940 I went to Edfu, where the first stage of military conscription [702] examinations takes place, and I was exempted on the basis of my knowing the Koran, after I had succeeded in the oral examination held for the purpose.[3]

'A year before I was called up for conscription, I left the Kuttab and devoted myself to farm work, and I got married when I was nineteen years old. I worked on my father's land until 1944, when I was appointed [744] as a malaria supervisor to distribute tablets of quinine to the families during the malaria epidemic. For this purpose I had to make a survey of the population in the village to distribute the tablets, accordingly asking the

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[153] [1] A memory task of some magnitude: the Koranic text is a little longer than that of the New Testament.

[783] [2] Wearing of white clothes on certain occasions is a symbol of ceremonial cleanliness and purity.

[702] [3] Till 1948, sons of village omdas and sheikhs, those who paid £E20 exemption fee, those who knew the Koran by heart and University students could be exempted from military conscription. Since then a law has been passed decreeing that military conscription is universal, with very few exemptions, e.g. the single supporter of a family in the case of the father's death.

head of the family to sign or stamp whenever he received his allocation. 159
I left this job when the malaria campaign finished in 1948 to resume my 944
work in farming. Though farming is an honourable job, it does not suffice for the necessities of life these days and I am now looking for another job in the village.

'Later on I went to Cairo and Alexandria for a month to "see the world", 988
and to visit the holy tombs in these two cities. Indeed, Cairo is the "Mother of the World". Yes, there is a lot of corruption and impiety, but it is preserved by the big Saints, the Mosques, and the "circles of knowledge" conducted in the Mosques. You can also hear the Koran recited beautifully on the radio, and of all this there is nothing in Silwa.

'I occupied some of my spare time in writing letters for some men and women who are illiterate, and who have relatives in Cairo or Alexandria, asking them for financial help or for clothes.'

On asking him to mention the important events in his life, he recorded:

'With regard to the important events in my life, I here refer to the incident that happened when I was very young playing with other children near the railway station. My playmates started to throw stones at each
other and when I started doing the same, my stone smashed one of the 738
glass windows of the building. I tried to escape the railway guard, but he caught me and I was sent to the omda who gave me three strokes with a stick, and my father had to pay for the repair of the glass.

'The second event I remember was my inability to speak for some time when I was fifteen years old. My parents were worried about it, and
they took me to various Saints' tombs and religious men for treatment. 755
At last they took me to a Saint's shrine near Isna, called Sheikh Al-Naggar, who is considered to be the best healer for such diseases, especially when one is "mounted by spirits" (jinns). There, with my mother, we spent a week, and from that time I was cured.

The third important event besides my marriage, occurred this year when I deputized for my father on a visit to Bardis, on the invitation of our "cousins" there who wanted to establish their holy descent.'

In assessing Ali's life with regard to his point of view as an informant he is in many ways representative of the learned section of the village population. He not only knows the Koran and is well-versed in religion, but he is also well aware of his mundane and practical duties. The greatest number of the learned men (Khotaba) of the village are either blind, lame, or landless. Ali, on the other hand, is a religious man who has occasionally performed religious functions on ceremonial occasions, and he is also a farmer who works in the fields. He takes part in reading the 'Prophet's Story' during the night-celebration of the Prophet's birth in his clan's guest house, and occasionally reads parts of the theological books on canon law (Fikh) to enlighten himself as well as other people on their religious duties. He is also called upon to write deeds and records, since his handwriting is excellent. He once told me that he took great pains

APPENDIX II

796 The following is the lunar calendar and the main religious events connected with it.

Lunar Months	*Religious Events*
Muharram	First day of the month is celebrated as the beginning of the new year. Tenth occasions a 'Rahmat' meal on ' 'Ashoura'.[1]
Safar	—
Rabi Awwal	Celebration of the Prophet's birthday on the 12th.
Rabi Tani	—
Jamad Awwal	—
Jamad Tani	—
Rajab	A 'Rahmat' meal to commemorate the Prophet's journey from Medina to Jerusalem 'Israi' on 27th.
Shaaban	Meal and prayers on the 14th.
[985] Ramadan	The month of fasting.
Shawwal	On its first day is the breaking of the fast and the celebration of 'Id Ramadan, first feast.
[988] Zul Ka'dda	Preparation for pilgrimage.
Zul Hijjah	'Rhamat' meal on the 9th day called 'Arafat'. Tenth celebration of the Great Feast ('Id al Adha).

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[1] Ashoura is a Shiite event of lamentation and blood sacrifice to commemorate the death of Husain. In spite of the fact that the villagers are Sunnis (Malikites) they have a special meal to invoke God's mercy on their departed.

[P.259]

Appendix Five

THE WOMAN WHO SPEAKS IN KORANIC QUOTATIONS[1]

ABDULLAH IBN AL-MUBARAK relates: 'I intended to perform my 788 539 pilgrimage one year, so I joined the caravan that was going to Mecca. On the way I overslept one night, only to find on my awaking that the caravan had left. While pursuing the caravan, I found a woman who had also lost her way. On my enquiring her name, she answered, "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—and mention Mary in the Book".[1] So I knew that her name was Mary (Mariam). I offered her food, but she refused, saying, "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent [785] God".[2] As I understood that she was fasting, I recited to her, "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—but whoever among you is sick or on a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days".[3] To this she replied, "In the name of God . . . and that you fast is better for you if you know". Then I asked her whether she wanted to ride on my camel, and she recited, "In the name of God . . . and whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he (or she) is a believer—these shall enter the Garden, and they shall not be dealt with a jot unjustly".[4] So I knew she wanted to ride, so I made the camel kneel for her to mount, and she recited, "In the name of God . . . say to the believing men that they cast down their looks, and guard their private parts: that is pure for them: surely Allah is aware of what they do".[5] Immediately I knew that she desired me to be modest, so I turned away my face while she mounted. While I was urging the camel to get up, she quoted, "In the name of God . . . Glory to Him who made this subservient to us, and we were not able to do it".[6] On the way I asked her whether she had any children and her answer was, "In the name of God . . . and mention Abraham in the Book: surely he was a truthful man, a Prophet".[7] "O John (Yahya), take

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[1] Koran, xix, 16.
[2] Koran, xix, 26.
[3] Koran, ii, 184.
[4] Koran, iv, 124.
[5] Koran, xxiv, 30.
[6] Koran, xliii, 13.
[7] Koran, xix, 41.

1 [For commentary on this story, see category 116, p.73-Ammar]

788 539 hold of the Book with strength, and We granted him wisdom while yet a child."[1] "And to Moses, Allah addressed His word, speaking (speaking to him)."[2] So I understood that she had three boys by the names of Ibrahim, Yahya, and Mousa. On asking her how her sons were occupied she replied, "In the name of God . . . and landmarks: and by the stars they find the right way".[3] So I knew that they worked as guides on the desert routes. We went on conversing till sunset, when I offered her food to break her fast, and in gratitude, she said, "In the name of God . . . and whatever good things you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged".[4]

'In the morning we reached Mariam's home, and I met her three sons, 574 who thereupon killed a ram, offering me a grand repast. Mariam herself invited me to eat, reciting, "In the name of God . . . eat and drink pleasantly for what you did".[5] Before I left their place, I asked her sons the reason for their mother's talking thus, always quoting from the Koran. They told me that, one day, while she was reading the Holy Book she came across the text, "He utters not a word, but there is by him a watcher at hand".[6] She immediately took a vow not to utter any statement from that time on which was not in the Koran, for fear of falling into sin.

'The following year, I went to call on Mariam at her house, and on finding her sons there, enquired about their mother. They told me she was on her death-bed. This saddened me, so I received permission to approach her, and drawing near her asked how she felt. She answered, "In the name of God . . . and the stupor of death will come in truth: that is what you shunned".[7] I remained at her side until she died, and then we washed her, wrapped her in her shroud, prayed over her, and buried her. I stayed alone beside her grave, and when night fell, I called out to her, "What has God done to you, Mariam?" I heard a faint voice answering as if from a distance, "In the name of God . . . and reward them, because they were patient, with Garden and silk".

'Reclining therein on raised couches, they shall find therein neither (the severe heat of) the sun nor the intense cold. And close down upon them (shall be) its shadows, and its fruits shall be made near (to them), being easy to reach. And there shall be made to go round about them vessels of silver and goblets which are of glass.

'(Transparent as) glass, made of silver, they have measured them according to a measure.

'And they shall be made to drink therein a cup, the admixture of which shall be ginger.

'(Of) a fountain therein which is named Salsabil.

'And round about them shall go youths never altering in age; when you see them, you will think them to be pearls, scattered, broadcast.

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[1] Koran, xix, 12.
[2] Koran, iv, 164.
[3] Koran, xvi, 16.
[4] Koran, ii, 272.
[5] Koran, lii, 19.
[6] Koran, l, 18.
[7] Koran, l, 19.

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APPENDIX V

'And when you see these, you shall see blessings, and a great kingdom. 788

'Upon them shall be garments of fine green silk and thick silk interwoven with gold, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink. 539

'Surely this is a reward for you, and your striving shall be recompensed.'[1]

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[1] Koran, xii, 21.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927

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347 Shops of different kinds are situated in the wider streets or lanes, with open fronts which can be closed with wooden shutters when the owners are away (Fig. 11). Through the open shop-fronts the 463 tailors are to be seen making *gaḷālīb* (long blouses; singular, [294] *gallabīyeh*) for their customers, and in some villages one may [326] watch the coppersmiths manufacturing bowls and jars. The vessels are hammered into shape over iron bars fixed in the ground. The iron bar is bent over at a right angle at the top, and flattened out so as to form a kind of anvil, on which the bowl or other vessel is beaten into shape.

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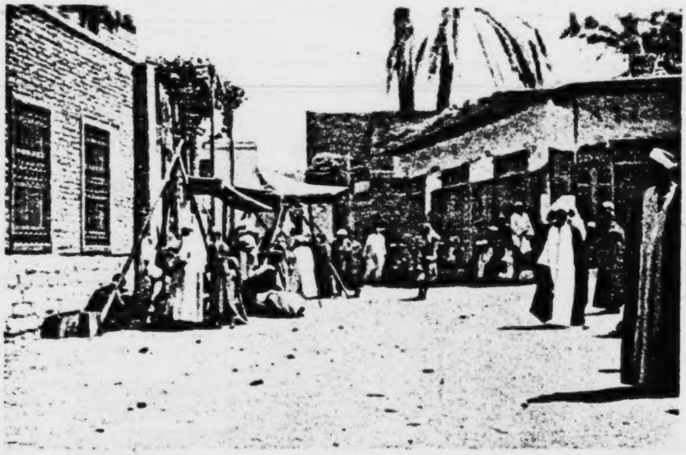

FIG. 11. A VILLAGE STREET WITH SHOPS AND BUTCHERS' BOOTHS

352 Benches of bricks and mud (*maṣāṭib*, singular *maṣṭabeh*) are 461 found outside some of the houses, and on them is usually to be seen 231 a collection of children, fowls, goats, and even sheep, in happy pro- ● 788 miscuity. Or perhaps a *maṣṭabeh* may be occupied solely by an old man, spinning wool, or holding a rosary in his hand and slowly passing the beads between his fingers and thumb (Fig. 12).

243 During harvest-time the swishing of the sticks as men and women 465 beat the grain from the bundles of corn which they have received as wages for work in the fields,[1] resounds along the village streets.

312 The Yūsuf Canal (Figs. 4 and 13) flows past a village in which 823 I have frequently resided, and there is a good deal of folklore con- 755 nected with it. The water is believed to possess curative properties

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[1] See Chapter X.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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789 If a woman has lost several children in succession, when another one arrives she has it tattooed with a small dot in the centre of its forehead and another on the outer side of the left ankle. She
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[776] believes that after this the child will live, because her *ḳarīneh*, seeing these marks, will not attempt to take her child.[1] The belief is that when King David had the interview with the queen of the *aḳrān* described in the following chapter she promised that any child that had these tattoo marks on the forehead and ankle should not be injured by its mother's *ḳarīneh*.

F
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755
753
776 One man, who was a village guard far south in Upper Egypt, had a fish tattooed on the inner side of one arm, near the wrist. He told me that it was done some years before, when he was possessed by an *ʿafrīt*, that it quite cured him, and that he had never been troubled in that way since. This fish mark does not always serve a curative purpose, for in a village much farther north I saw
F
[531] a boy with a similar design tattooed on the back of one of his hands, and he assured me that it was done only as an ornament.

F
C
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787 Most of the Copts have a cross tattooed on the inner sides of the wrists There is a belief among some, if not all, of those Copts belonging to the *fellāḥīn* class that the Abyssinians will one day conquer Egypt, and will kill all the Copts as well as the Muslims if they (the Copts) cannot show this sign on their wrists. The Copts will, it is said, hold up their hands, thus exposing to view the sign of their religion.

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C
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531
788 One Coptic friend of mine, a man of good position, showed me some tattoo marks on his arm. There was an elaborate pattern on the inner side of his arm, below which were tattooed the dates of the two occasions on which he had gone on pilgrimages to Jerusalem—1911 and 1914. Another Copt told me that his little sister also had the year of her visit to Jerusalem tattooed on one arm, and that in future the year of each succeeding pilgrimage that she made to the sacred city would be similarly recorded. His mother, who had performed the pilgrimage on several occasions, had had each year of this event tattooed on one of her arms. Tattooing can thus be a means of record-keeping.

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463 The operation of tattooing is an exceedingly painful one, and has very often unpleasant results, though the discomfort may be only temporary. One of my servants, a young man of about twenty-two years of age, was very anxious to have the back of his right hand tattooed this year. A specialist in the art was usually

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[1] See pp. 69 ff. for explanation of *ḳarīneh*.

the bier from the ground, and the procession is continued to the 764
grave. As they proceed the men chant the profession of faith: 152
"There is no God but God, and Muḥammed is the Apostle of God. [788] ●
The blessing of God upon him and peace, a thousand blessings upon
Muḥammed." These words are repeated over and over again till
the graveside is reached.

It is believed that the dead, while being carried to the grave, can 764
make their bearers walk fast or slowly. If the bearers are made 775
to go quickly it is said to mean that the deceased is a good man or 787
woman, who wishes to go as fast as possible to the tomb, and does
not fear the visit of the two angels Nākir and Nekīr, who are [776]
believed to come to the tomb on the first night after burial to
examine the deceased as to the life he spent on earth and to question
him as to his religion.

When the bearers suddenly feel themselves being dragged back, or even unable to move at all, it is believed to be that the deceased does not like the spot chosen for the grave.

During a funeral procession in a village well known to me the bearers were not able to advance a step, owing to the dead man objecting to the locality of his grave; however, as it had already been dug, and the bearers were not willing to pander to any such whim, they carried the bier round and round in a circle, thus making the dead man so giddy that he lost his power over his bearers and did not realize where they were conveying him! They were thus able to rush him into his grave without more ado!

On another occasion, in the road running past my house, I saw the bearers being dragged back by constant jerks. The reason given was that the dead woman who was being carried to her grave was upset that her son, a very young boy, was not in the procession. Some one, therefore, had to fetch him, and then the *cortège* proceeded on its way without further interruption.

There appears to be a belief, at any rate among some of the 774
peasants, that a man's shadow is a separate entity. It walks with 775
him through life, dies with him at his death, and then enters with
him into his tomb. When discussing this point with some of the
people I gathered that no one knew what became of it afterward.
I was told that there is no belief, such as is found in some parts of
the world, that a man may be injured by some one stepping on his
shadow.

On returning to the house of the deceased the men seat them- 764

764 selves outside the doorway, where they are joined by friends, all observing almost complete silence, except on arrival, when they may say, "*El-baḳīyeh fi ḥayātak*"—literally, "May what remains over be in your life!"—*i.e.*, "May the rest of the days of the dead be added to your life!"

764 The female mourners, including the professional wailers, con-
gregate together, either inside the house or in some secluded spot
535 outside. Here they continue to utter their piercing cries, and
usually also engage in a dance. The dancers, each one swaying slightly backward and forward, move in a circle, smiting their cheeks the while with both hands in rhythmic accompaniment to their chanting and cries. I have seen women thus beating their cheeks till blood flowed. One of the dancers often beats a *nadam*,
[534] a single-membrane drum, resembling a tambourine, but without jingles.

765 The mourning ceremonies are continued for seven days, though
very occasionally they may last for three days only. The first
788 evening after the burial *fuḳahā* come to the house, one of them
782 bringing a large rosary, called a *sibḥeh*, consisting of five hundred
793 to a thousand large beads. They repeat passages from the Ḳorān a thousand times, keeping count of the recitations by means of the beads. The merit of this religious exercise is conveyed to the deceased. During the period of mourning *fuḳahā* come daily to the house to recite the Ḳorān, but the ceremony with the rosary is performed on the first night only.

765 The *fuḳahā* are usually given a small sum of money for their
services, and also at intervals in their recitations they are refreshed
793 with coffee and cigarettes, but no one, either performer or listener,
[465] would ever think of smoking while they are in progress. I have been present several times on such occasions, and have been much impressed by the excellence of many of the voices, as well as by the reverent attitude of all the people present. The *fuḳahā* sit cross-
[516] legged on a bench inside the house, and, as they recite, sway from side to side, holding one hand against one side of the face. One of them usually acts as leader, and the others join in as a chorus;
[788] or sometimes the chief *fiḳīh* will tell one of his subordinates to take his place and recite. The recitations last for an hour or more.

765 On the seventh day after a death the mourning at the house
431 ceases, and the women, accompanied by their male relatives, visit the grave. They bring loaves of bread, called *kaḥk*, which are

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927

MR13 Fellahin MR13

Upper Egypt

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

769 Some of the women brought with them large baskets full of
775 bread-rings, and with these they rewarded the *fuḳahā* for their
262 recitations, which are believed to be of great benefit to the dead.
The bread used on these occasions is in this part of Egypt nearly
● 188 always made in the ring shape, and sweets of all kinds, cakes, etc.,
735 are also brought for distribution, especially by the richer people. There was usually a certain number of the very poorest people present, as well as children, who had come in the hope of receiving a share in the gifts. One of these suppliants might say, "*Iddīnī ḥaseneh, yā sitt*" ("Give me *ḥaseneh*, O lady"). The word *ḥaseneh* means charity, and is a general term for the bread, etc., given away on these occasions; the bread, as I have mentioned above, being called *kaḥk*.

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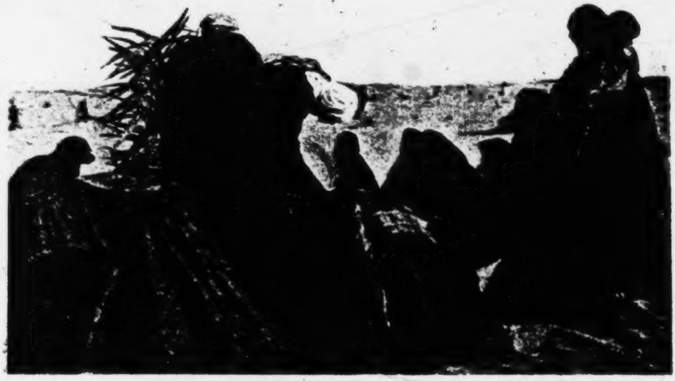

FIG. 53. WOMEN CROUCHING OVER A GRAVE

769 On presenting bread to the *fuḳahā* or to the poor the giver will
735 say, "*Khud kaḥk ʿala rōḥ el-fulān*" ("Take a cake on behalf of
775 the soul of so and so"), mentioning the name of the dead relation.
It is quite a moving sight to see the faces of the women contorted
292 with grief, the tears streaming down their cheeks, as they crouch
152 over the graves, swaying backward and forward (Fig. 53). They hold in their hands coloured handkerchiefs, generally of silk, used only on these occasions or at a funeral. Sometimes a large one, often black with a coloured border, is doubled cornerwise and

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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DEATH AND FUNERARY CEREMONIES

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I mounted my donkey and accompanied them. The women went only a short way with us, and we left them, the hysterical sister in their midst, huddled together on the high road which led through the cultivation, still shrieking, smiting their faces, and waving their arms aloft. As we passed on toward the peaceful desert their cries grew fainter and fainter in the distance, till at last no sound broke the stillness save the occasional singing of a hymn by the men who formed the funeral *cortège*.

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When we arrived at the gate of the monastery every one passed within the precincts, and the bearers carried the coffin into the church, setting it down in front of the curtain behind which was the altar. We all entered the sacred building, and a seat was offered to me close to the corpse. There was a large assembly of both Copts and Muslims, for the dead man was much respected by the followers of both religions among whom he had lived. We waited and waited, but still there was no sign of a priest. The men beguiled the time by talking and smoking, and, though I am sure it was not at all intentional, there was an extraordinary lack of reverent demeanour in those present. At last the priest arrived. The whole congregation immediately rose to their feet, and after the priest had shaken hands with me the others came forward in turns and kissed his hand. The lid of the coffin was now removed, and the body disclosed, wrapped in its white and green coverings. A very dirty cloth, on which was sewn a cross in green, was placed over the body, and candles were lighted and stuck to the sides of the coffin—six on each side and one each at the head and feet. This was accomplished by dropping some of the melting wax from the lighted candles on to the coffin and sticking the candles on to it. Two larger candles were fitted into large candlesticks placed on either side of the head of the coffin. These candlesticks were possibly of silver, but were in such a dirty state that it was impossible to guess with any certainty of what they were made.

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The service then began. It was very long, lasting for three hours or more! The priest was accompanied by the *'arīf*, as the man who leads the singing in a Coptic church is called. The latter was quite blind, and had a very resonant voice. When he sang he accompanied himself on a pair of cymbals. There was a great deal of this 'music,' and also recitations by the priest of portions of the Gospels. Furthermore, another man, whom he singled out from among those present, likewise read passages from the

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[537]

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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764 Scriptures. After interminable readings and chantings there was
794 a pause, and one of the mourners present clapped his hands, thus
788 commanding the attention of every one in the church. He then
533 began the funeral oration, extolling the dead man and mentioning
537 many of his good deeds. He spoke with great fervour and sincerity, though he was himself a Muslim, and I much admired his restrained gestures, his fluency, and his clear enunciation. He was really a good speaker and entirely devoid of self-consciousness. After the speech was ended the candles were put out and removed from the sides of the coffin, the lid was replaced, the bearers hoisted the coffin on to their shoulders, and, preceded by the priest and the *ʿarīf*, walked three times round the church, followed by all the mourners. After the third perambulation they came down the
F centre of the building, and so out of the church to the place of burial.

764 There is no service at the grave among the Copts, and after loud-voiced and conflicting advice from every man in the crowd assembled round the grave the coffin was at last successfully lowered to its final resting-place, a vault in which a number of interments had already been made. Finally the opening to the vault was bricked up and the earth flung back into its place again, and we
F all set off for our several abodes.

765 The mourning at the house usually lasts for seven days, as with
252 the Muslims, though the period is sometimes reduced to three days
775 only. During those seven or three days, according to one of my
356 Coptic informants, no food is cooked in the house of mourning,
782 but supplies are brought in by village friends. According to the same informant, prayers are offered up in the church by the priest on the third, seventh, fifteenth, and fortieth days after a death; these prayers are believed to be the means of saving a lost soul. During the fifteen days the house of mourning is not swept, but no
F reason was given for this custom.

765 On the third day after a death has taken place a priest, attended
775 by the *ʿarīf*, goes to the house of the dead man or woman. Some of
793 the uneducated Copts believe that the priest on this occasion dismisses the soul of the dead person from the house, where it is believed to remain until that day. I was present for this ceremony after the death of the Copt whose funeral I described above. As his relations were very poor people the ceremony was doubtless far less elaborate than it would be in the case of people in a better position.

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DEATH AND FUNERARY CEREMONIES

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The priest, I was told, was to arrive at 3.30 P.M., so I started off for the house early in the afternoon. I found a number of women seated in an inner room, wailing and waving their coloured handkerchiefs with the usual rhythmic movements. The sister of the dead man began a long dissertation in his praise, speaking of all his good qualities and good deeds. She would speak for a short time, then pause, whereupon the wailing women would join in a rhythmic chorus of cries, occasionally uttering the customary piercing cries of grief. The sister would again take up her theme, followed shortly by the wailing women as before.

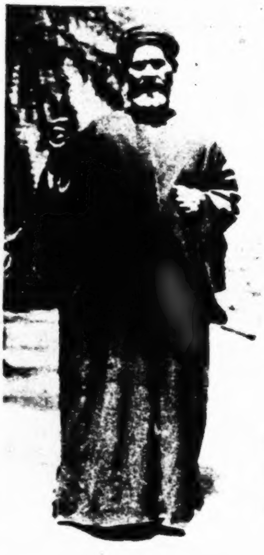

FIG. 56. COPTIC PRIEST HOLDING CROSS

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Meanwhile, one of the men seated outside the house came in and handed round cigarettes. Several of the women smoked, but this form of enjoyment did not in the least interfere with, or interrupt, the wailing and screaming. Still the priest did not come, though all the arrangements for his visit had been made—a large metal basin of water being placed on a chair, with a glass decanter of water standing in it. At last, after four o'clock, he arrived with his *'arīf*, both of them having come from the monastery in the desert a few miles off. The priest read some prayers, after which the *'arīf* chanted certain passages, and then portions from the Bible were read aloud by one of the men present. Immediately upon his arrival the priest had placed a small silver cross (see Fig. 56) in the basin of water, and it remained there all the time the reading and chanting were in progress. When these were ended he removed the cross, which was, of course, dripping with water, turned to me, and pressed it on my forehead, making the sign of the cross on me at the same time. He repeated this ceremony with each of the men in turn, and then, turning toward the crowd of women, sprinkled them with some of the water from the basin. Incense had been kept burning from the moment of the priest's arrival, and he now took up the censer and advanced with it toward the room

765 in which the man had died. Every one was censed as he passed
788 toward the room, and one of the men, who accompanied him,
783 carried the basin of water. The priest censed this room and
E sprinkled the whole of it, together with the mattress on which the
dead had lain, with the water. This terminated the ceremony,
[346] and the priest and his *ʿarīf* departed for the desert monastery.

E There is a common belief among the Copts of the peasant class
783 that this sprinkling of the water in the house drives away the soul
775 of the person who has died. This use of the water together with the incense is probably in origin a purificatory rite, cleansing the house and the inhabitants from the contamination of death, though such a belief, at any rate among the peasants, does not appear to exist at the present day.

454 It is the custom of many of the countryfolk to hide their money underground, either in their houses or outside, and I know of more than one very rich man who refuses to put his money in a bank, but prefers to bury it. Such people, of course, though wealthy, [87] are entirely without education, beyond a knowledge of reading and writing. Perhaps they may confide the secret as to where the money is buried to a brother or wife, but sometimes they die without telling anyone where it is concealed. I have been told by one or two officials that such stores of money have been accidentally discovered from time to time, and these discoveries are quite enough to account for the large number of stories about hidden treasure which are current all over the country.

754 As I have already stated, and as I propose to show in the following paragraphs, the magicians' powers are sometimes employed for sinister purposes.

If a man wants to make his wife hate him so that he may easily divorce her he calls in the aid of a magician, who will proceed as follows. He takes an egg which was laid on a Wednesday, and on the shell of it he writes certain magic letters, which are supposed to form the name of the King of the Tombs. He then takes the egg and buries it in a tomb, but on no account must anyone know which tomb it is. For Christians it would be the tomb of a Christian, for Muslims that of a Muslim. By the time that the magician has returned from depositing the egg in its hiding-place the charm has already begun to work. The egg must always be left where he placed it. Should anyone discover its secret hiding-place and remove it the charm loses its effect, and the woman would again love her husband.

If a man wishes to procure the death of a man whom he regards as his enemy he will go to a magician, who acts in the following way. He takes a hen and kills it, keeping the blood in some vessel. He then obtains an egg laid by a hen that has black feathers only, and on it he writes this magic square (Fig. 116) with the blood of the hen he has killed. He burns some incense, holding the egg over
754 the fumes, with the inscribed side downward, repeating the follow-
● 788 ing incantation three times: "In the Name of God, the Com-
passionate, the Merciful. By the Name of God, the Mighty King
776 and Majesty. Possessor of Possessions, the Throne and Seat, the Heavens and Earth. Blessed be God, Lord of the World, Lord of all power and transcendent might. Light of Light and Spirit of Spirits. All Glorious, Holy Lord of Angels and the Spirit, praise

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927

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Him, the Highest. Take charge, Angel Gabrāīl, of the illness 754
[presumably in the sense of 'make it your charge to make him 788
ill'] of so and so, the son of so and so [mentioning the mother's 776
name]. Quickly, now!" The egg is then hidden in a tomb.

I am informed that this is a very interesting charm: black typi- 754
fying evil, blood attracting spirits, and a tomb being the haunt 776
of ghoulish spirits.[1]

It may be mentioned here that in all these charms, spells, and incantations it is necessary to write the name of the *mother* of the person whom it concerns. If the father's name is inserted instead the charm is abortive.

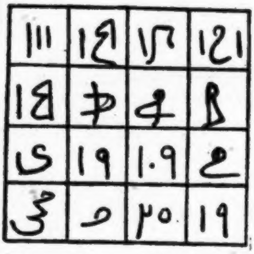

FIG. 116. A MAGIC SQUARE

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The events related in the following story are, so my informant strongly maintains, perfectly true.

In a small village in Upper Egypt there lived a man and his wife, the latter being very good-looking. One day a certain *ḳāḍi*[2] who was visiting the village in question saw her, and, falling in love with her on the spot, desired her as his wife. Knowing that she was already married, his only plan was to get rid of her husband, and so he determined to drive the unfortunate man mad. To accomplish this he induced a magician to write a charm on a piece of paper, which he tied to an inner branch high up on a palm-tree, where it could not easily be seen. The reason for his thus tying the charm to a palm-branch is the idea that, as the branches of the tree are blown this way and that in the wind in apparent confusion, so the brain of the man against whom the spell was concocted would be tortured and confused. Possibly the woman's husband got to know what had been done, but anyhow the poor man lost his reason. He tore off his clothes, tied a rope round his waist, and spoke at times in an unknown tongue.

"You must say," so he told the village boys who congregated around him, "'*Kee ree bra ra kee ree bru.*'"

He would also constantly mutter, "Kamaleh [his wife's name] went to the east, Kamaleh went to the east," repeating it over and

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[1] I am indebted to Mr E. S. Thomas for this information.

[2] The word means 'judge,' as has been already explained, but it is also, as in this instance, a title given to a man who draws up marriage contracts, hears divorce cases in villages, and so on.

smells it unconscious. Evidently the man induces his enemy to 754
come to his house, and the latter, not knowing what has been prepared for him, becomes unconscious from the fumes before he has time to realize the trick played upon him. This method has been tried and has never failed, according to my informant.

In order to restore consciousness the urine of a man must be injected up the nostrils, which, I am told, is a sure restorative. [757]
Anyone who makes a fire of this kind must first take a mixture of *semn* (see p. 167) and olive oil, and stuff it up his nostrils to prevent himself also from being overcome by the fumes.

This device is likewise resorted to by people who are travelling 484
across desolate and dangerous spots, where they are liable to meet 751
wild animals. These, on sniffing the fumes from the fire, become unconscious, so that the travellers can pass them by in safety.

One day in 1926 when I was visiting a certain village in Middle 787
Egypt one of my friends there, a very respectable and well-to-do 685
man, came to see me and informed me that he had had several articles stolen from his house, and that he intended to call in the help of a magician who was clever at discovering thieves by means of divination. He invited me to attend the ceremony, which took place a few days later. The magician came from another village a few miles off, and was brought to me to be introduced. I ordered coffee and cigarettes, and after these refreshments had been partaken of we settled down to the business in hand. Some writing-paper was torn into small strips, and a different name, suggested in every case by my friend, was written on each. The magician produced a copy of the Ḳorān, and asked for an iron doorkey. One was brought, which he rejected, as he said it was not native-made. A suitable one, however, was found, and then the magician opened the book at a certain chapter, put in one of the inscribed slips of paper, and inserted the doorkey, leaving the handle of the key outside the book. This book and key were now bound together with string, in such a way as to prevent the key from moving. A pottery saucer containing a charcoal fire was then brought, into which the magician dropped incense. A third man who was present and the magician faced each other on either side of the burning incense, the Ḳorān being suspended by the key on the first finger of the right hand of each man (Fig. 118). The fumes from the incense rose around the Ḳorān, passages from which were recited [788]
by the magician. Presently the book began to move, and, according

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927

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● [788]

colours, and wearing tall, peaked hats. Two of them held him by the feet, and two held his head. He immediately crossed himself, and said, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." At the mention of these sacred names the *'afārīt* dropped him on the floor and disappeared.

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FIG. 136. A COPTIC CHOIR-BOY

I was told that the Sheikh B's anger was aroused because the man, by his recitation of the Psalms, had stopped his communications with the *'afārīt*; and so, in order to punish him, he sent the four *'afārīt* to frighten him. Since that date the Sheikh B has refused to enter that house.

C
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The following story tells how a naughty boy was punished by an *'afrīt*. It should be explained here that it is the custom among the Copts for men and boys to gather together every evening during the month of *Kiyahk*, which begins on December 9 or 10, to recite from memory special prayers and passages from the Bible in Coptic. Thus engaged they remain in the church till daybreak, when the priest comes for the service. Coptic boys acquire a smattering of the ancient language when at the school of the *'arīf*, the title of the officiant who leads the singing in the church.

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C
[198]
[871]

C
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On one such occasion the boy just alluded to was in the church with a number of his companions, taking part in the recitations. He left the church for a few minutes, and on his way back saw a very fine donkey standing in the open space in front of the church. The sight of this donkey proving to be irresistible to him, he immediately mounted it, and, digging his heels into its sides, urged it to go faster and faster round and round the open space. Suddenly the donkey began to grow taller and taller, till it reached the height of about five metres It then suddenly vanished, and the

778 and bead bracelets, bunches of human hair, handkerchiefs, first- 782 fruits of the cornfields, and so on. Each one registers an answered prayer, for the people flock in crowds to these tombs on certain days of the week—usually Thursdays or Fridays—generally to make some special request, or with the object of being freed from [775] some disease, which they believe the sheikh can cure. A childless [842] woman, or persons possessed by *'afārīt*, will come to beg the sheikh to intercede for them. Indeed, the performances of certain rites at the tomb may in themselves effect a cure.

Having removed his or her shoes before entering the building, ● [788] the visitor then walks from left to right round the catafalque erected beneath the dome three, five, or seven times, reciting meanwhile special passages from the Ḳorān. These perambulations accomplished, the servant of the sheikh takes a broom, kept for this special purpose, and carefully brushes out all the footprints in the interior of the building.

[231] Sick animals are also brought by their owners to a sheikh's tomb, round which they are driven seven times.

778 In one of the provinces of Upper Egypt, on the lower desert, 766 stands the domed tomb of the sheikh Ḥasan 'Ali (Fig. 139). It is surrounded by a low mud-brick wall, which encloses a few small trees, a well, and two or three graves, wherein relatives of the dead sheikh lie buried. Pots of *ṣabr* (aloes) also decorate the sacred [824] spot, for this plant is believed to bring happiness to the dead. [775] The building is whitewashed, and is decorated with line-drawings in red and blue, illustrating the pilgrimage to Mecca. The surrounding desert is covered with the graves of more ordinary folk. These are marked by heaps of sand, into which are stuck branches of palm-trees, for palm-branches, like the aloe-plants, are believed to be the means of conveying happiness to the dead who lie beneath.

159 The sheikh Ḥasan 'Ali was only eighteen years old when he died, 792 but from his earliest years he was noted for his piety. He was 872 educated at a small school in his native village, and, as soon as he had learned to read, he spent all his leisure moments studying the 764 Ḳorān. When he died he was buried in an ordinary grave in the lower desert among his dead fellow-villagers. However, one day, 775 when old 'Ali (his father) was squatting on a *maṣṭabeh* (see p. 32), with his head resting on his hand, his dead son appeared before him and caught hold of him by the wrist, saying, "I am very angry."

His father said, "Why are you angry, my son?"

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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CHAPTER XVI

SOME ANNUAL FESTIVALS

796 THE *Mūlid en-Nebi*, the annual celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, is of course the most important of all the festivals held in honour of Muslim saints. However, I shall content myself here with a description of some of the annual *mawālid* (plural of *mūlid*) held in honour of local village saints which I have attended myself during my six years' sojourn in Egypt.

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778
531 The sheikh Umbārak is buried in a village in Middle Egypt, and a whitewashed domed building has been erected above his grave. One or two of the outside walls of his tomb are, as is customary, decorated with pictures descriptive of the pilgrimage to Mecca,[1] roughly sketched in red and blue paint, the remainder [212] being inscribed with passages from the Ḳorān. Around the dome are small, what might almost be called clerestory windows, in each of which a lighted candle is placed every night. There is a [794] female 'servant' attached to this sheikh, who is supposed to keep [782] the tomb in order, receive the donations of devotees, and light the candles every evening. One wonders how she manages to carry out this work satisfactorily, as she is quite blind!

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769 The *mūlid* held in honour of the sheikh Umbārak takes place in April and begins early in the afternoon, on the morning of which day similar festivals are inaugurated in certain neighbouring villages in honour of their own particular sheikhs.

At about two o'clock a large crowd collected in the vicinity of the sheikh's tomb, several people, chiefly women, seating themselves [794] around it. The blind servant received donations from the faithful on behalf of the sheikh, part of the time having the sheikh's flag wrapped around her (Fig. 141). As the donors presented their [788] gifts they recited the *Fātiḥah* in low and rapid tones. In the road which ran past the burial-ground, and in the adjacent palm-grove, the holiday-makers engaged in friendly conversation or indulged in various amusements (Fig. 142); and along the roadside booths

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[1] See p. 245, Fig. 140.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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796 769 In spite of the heat, millions of flies, and clouds of dust, the festival of the sheikh Umbārak was conducted with the utmost good humour, and the behaviour of the crowds was perfect. It came to an end at about seven o'clock.

On the following day the annual *mūlid* of the sheikh Ṣabr was celebrated at his village, which is most picturesquely situated on the bank of the Yūsuf Canal. As I have stated in Chapter XV, this sheikh is much venerated, not only in his own village, but in villages for many miles around. I have been present at his *mūlid* on two or three occasions, and each time large crowds have assembled to do him honour.

The festival begins in the morning at about eleven o'clock, and a number of people joined me as I rode through the fields on my way to the village. Upon these occasions a brisk trade is always carried
[443] on, and piles of brightly coloured sweets are exposed for sale, together with toys, cheap ornaments, dates, and other delicacies. The vendors seat themselves under rough booths, which they erect on the spot, and under which they can take shelter from the fierce rays of the sun.

796 788 769 When I arrived a large *zikr* was taking place under the shade of the branches of the sacred tree. It was executed by a number of men forming a circle round the sheikh who conducted this religious exercise. The men swayed rhythmically from side to side, nodded their heads, or bent backward and forward as they pronounced the name of Allāh over and over again. The presiding sheikh beat time by clapping his hands, while now and then a *fiḳīh* would chant passages from the Ḳorān. The ceremony was conducted with great earnestness and solemnity, but some of the performers became so worked up with religious fervour that from time to time they leaped into the air, and finally fell on the ground from exhaustion.

796 769 [529] Close to where this religious performance was taking place was to be found the usual large wheel, with its hanging seats. Here the children had congregated, all of them clamouring for a ride, as they are to be seen doing about the whirligigs and swings provided at the fairs in England.

[538] [533] At another spot a poet had collected a large audience, which listened with evident enjoyment while he gave his recitations to the accompanying beats of two tambourines and a shallow, single-membrane drum (*cf.* p. 266, Fig. 152).

The banners were much in evidence at this festival, and I

Copts MR10

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782
a mat, they listen to the *maazûn*, or preacher, as he reads 796
them a chapter from the Koran. 516

On Sundays the Christian fellaheen attend the intermin- F
able Coptic mass. But here worship is more of a family C
affair, and women take part in the prayers and chants. 788

The Moslems do not understand the literary dialect of C
the Koran, neither do the Christians understand the Coptic F
language of their mass. All the fellaheen from one end of 191
Egypt to the other speak what is called 'the vulgar tongue', 198
i.e. colloquial Arabic. This is a dialect differing a great 788
deal in its vocabulary from those of Syria and Morocco.
In Egypt there is no distinct dialect in this or that province,
but only a number of variant words and expressions, and,
in the South, a more guttural pronunciation, which betrays
the Upper Egyptian.

Fasting is strictly observed by the Moslems in Ramadan F
and by the Copts in Lent. The former during the holy month C
abstain from all eating and drinking from dawn to sunset. 785
The latter, for about two hundred days of the year, eat 262
nothing from midnight to midday.

Almsgiving is another obligation which the fellaheen F
do not neglect. Within the limits of their means they fulfil 735
it ungrudgingly, not in money but in kind. They make 782
gifts to the blind, to ministers of religion, and to those poorer 431
than themselves; and this in addition to regular and compulsory presents.

On the other hand, few fellaheen make the pilgrimage to C
Mecca, and if they do, it is at the price of heroic sufferings. F
The happy pilgrim, on his return after six or eight months' 794
absence, bringing blessings from the holy places to his village, 554
is welcomed like one coming back from the dead. His pious
achievement marks him out from the rest, and his children
share his renown. He is henceforward always addressed by C
the title of "*Hagg*" and his pilgrimage is commemorated on F
the walls of his house. On the white-washed front the [532]
crude outlines of men, carriages and ships are painted, with
his name and the date. The same customs are observed by
Coptic fellaheen who have visited Jerusalem, and thus earned
the titled of "*Muqaddis*".

More frequented and more popular than the mosque, F
because there is no distinction of age or sex, is the tomb of 778

8;Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

11.

The Straggler.

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788●
[484]

The pilgrimage to Mecca, which every pious Moslem is bound to make at least once in his life, is a long one; it goes by land and by sea, and for people unaccustomed to travel, it is attended with many cares and dangers. For this reason the pilgrims usually combine into caravans of some size. The little song pictures the perplexity of a straggler, who has missed connection with his caravan and is now totally at a loss.

Lines 1—2 are the words of another, who calls to the pilgrim: "Enough for to-day, for thou canst not possibly reach thy goal to-day!" Lines 3—7 are spoken by the pilgrim.

Sams el-ʻaṣāri ṛarabit,
yalli bilādak buʻād!
Wana bilādi Mikketi!
u-min ēn arūḥ?
5 *u-min ēn âgi?*
u-min ēn asaiyir markabi
u-min ēn azūrak, ya nabi?

"The afternoon sun has gone down,
Thou, whose country is afar off!" —
"O, the land I would go to is Mecca!
How shall I go?
5 How shall I reach my goal?
And how shall I sail my ship?
How shall I visit thee, O Prophet?"

21.

Inattentive Devotions.

×539 [114] [171] In 1873, in Cairo, Goldziher heard a song, in which our numbers 21 and 62 were united by a third piece. (Zeitschr. d. Deutsch. morg. Ges. 33, p. 627.) According to a communication of F. Kern, song 21 is also sung in Burdên, near Zaqāziq (Za'āzī').

Daḫaltĕ bēt Alla,
la'it ḥamām aḫḍar;
bila''amû sukkar.
Ya rētni du'to!
5 *Lagl-en-nabi zurto!*

[231] I have entered Allah's house,
And found gray doves;
They are fed with sugar.
O, if only I could have a taste of it!
5 — — But I have visited it for the sake of the Prophet!

1. The mosque, which the boy has entered for prayer.

2. [788] In the colonnaded, open court (ṣaḥn) of the mosque, in which stands the well for the ablutions. Here doves often alight. Aḫḍar designates the color gray as well as green, although the latter is more commonly the case. (Lane I p. 321.)

3. [770] He reproves himself for his childish, worldly thought. "It", that is, the house of Allah.

8;Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904

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39.

The New Railway.

539x

A girl, named Dināre wishes to go to Ṭanṭa, to the tomb 496 of Shēkh Aḥmed. (Compare No. 8—9.) At the time of the origin [788] of this little song, the railroad from Cairo to Alexandria had probably just been built. (It was opened in 1856.) Ṭanṭa lies in the province of Ṛarbiye, about fifty-four miles from [103] Cairo, on the railroad between Cairo and Alexandria; the [131] capital of the province of Beḥêre, Damanhûr, lies on the same railroad, still nearer to Alexandria, something over thirty-six miles from Ṭanṭa.

Dināre 'ālet: Yamma,
ana rāiḥe-s-Seiyid azūr,
warūḥ balad el-Beḥēre
watfarrag 'al-bagūr.

Dināre said: "Mother,
I am going to visit the Seiyid
And going to Beḥēre
To look at the railway".

Circumcision.

40. 41.

539x
852
304

Most boys are circumcised when six or seven years old, and the day is always celebrated by some festivity, at which the boy is decked out and led through the streets.

gather his friends around him for a social meeting in the 512
evening. The light of the moon and stars suffices, or if in [514]
winter they must retreat into the dark chamber, the weak
glimmer of an oil-lamp. In this country nothing is known
of nocturnal labours either of hand or head even among the [461]
learned, and the many blind and blear-eyed people that here
wander about have not contracted their ailments through
overstraining their eyes. As to-day is, so is to-morrow, and
the most momentous events passing in the great world here
make on most people no impression whatever. For it is only
a very few that receive a newspaper, and still fewer understand [204]
it, partly because its language is too fine, and therefore
not suited to the mass, partly because the necessary
previous knowledge of every kind is absent. Among the
ancient Egyptians the common people, such as artisans, were
forbidden under severe penalties to mingle in politics. It is
only the most urgent necessity that causes the citizen to take 484
a journey, and when he does travel he makes a pilgrimage [188]
to Meccah, or, at most, goes to some other country in which
Islam prevails. For in the land of the Franks something
would every instant come into collision with his ideas and
customs; he would have to eat, if not swine's flesh, yet dishes
in which swine's fat forms an ingredient; he would have to
eat carrion (that is, the flesh of animals strangled, and not
slaughtered with an invocation to God); he would not have
the proper conditions for the performance of his religious
duties, such as his ablutions and prayer five times a day, nor
any mosque or muezzin. If he ever happens to have been [186]
in Europe, or even in a town in which the Frankish mode of
life prevails, he never ceases to tell his countrymen of the [521]
ridiculous and preposterous things he saw there, of course
not without admitting that there was much good also,
especially if there be a Frank among his audience. The
ancient Egyptians had a still stronger prejudice and fanaticism
against foreign people and foreign things.

LIFE OF THE WOMEN. 512

Though the members of the opposite sex certainly do not 562

Thus strengthened it is possible for the Moslim in his 796
nocturnal devotions to perform the twenty systems of [788]
reverential bendings (*rák'a*) now demanded instead of the
usual three. On the streets there is not to be sure a surging
of people up and down, and there are also but a few of the
dealers or artisans' shops opened, but a bustle and traffic at
other times unusual on the street at night may still be noticed;
numerous sellers of fruits, and especially of confectionery, [443]
have lighted up their stations, and, till far into the night,
cry their wares, now so largely patronised by young and
old; the cafés are all well attended, and if one pleases he can [265]
now get here besides the black bitter coffee sweetened coffee [262]
or a cup of ginger water with sugar, and sometimes also
sherbet of rose-water, tamarinds, raisins, St. John's bread,
or, lastly, a drop of liquorice juice. A "poet" relates to the 538
by-standers the deeds of the hero Abuset or Antar, sometimes
bursting out into song, and accompanying himself by [534]
scraping on a one stringed fiddle. In another café a master
of music twangs with all the rapidity of a virtuoso the
innumerable treble strings of a kind of guitar, and draws [533]
from it those weak jingling tones which recall to us our boyhood
and the time when we received our first music lessons
on the dingy-keyed piano of a country schoolmaster. There
the guests listen to a story-teller; with voluble tongue and
poetic verse he describes the enchanted princes and princesses,
the excursions of the disguised Haroun al Rashid and his
viziers, the man-eating monsters, the Jewish enchanters, which
form the material for every one of those tales, the number
of which is far more than 1001. The narrative is extempore
—purely from memory.

In the houses matters proceed in the same way or even with 796
more liveliness. Everybody who has a house to offer "prepares 574
a couch" (*yfrish*) in order to receive guests, and treats
them to coffee. On such evenings the merriest humour prevails,
and at no time the whole year through does the
Moslim appear in such a hearty vein as on the nights of
Ramadan. He goes from one house to another and makes
a round of calls upon his friends and acquaintances. In

796 while those who have lost some one dear to them recall him [769] or her to their thoughts, proceed to the cemetery (especially the women), stick a palm branch into the grave mound, distribute pastry and alms, and even pass the night there with their family.

The other feast follows three months after. It is called the Great Feast or Feast of Offering, and lasts for four days, but is really the smaller feast. The baking, cannon-firing, receiving of visitors, embracing, congratulating, and dressing go on as at the little feast; the festive gaiety is, however, dulled, and is not so universal as after the Ramadan. The chief ceremony [782] on this occasion is the eating of "offering flesh" in memory of the offering of Abraham. Every believer *must* have his [262] piece of meat on this day, and anyone who cannot procure it for himself receives it from his richer neighbours, each of whom offers a sheep for every member of his family. The native Christians abstain from flesh on this day out of [788] opposition. This is the most brilliant period of the pilgrimage in Mecca.

FEAST OF THE SAINTS.

796 In the middle of the month Shaaban, which precedes 776 Ramadan, is celebrated the great annual jubilee (a kind of wakes), when every town that can claim to have had a saint of any note, having chosen him as its patron, honours his memory by some kind of festive demonstration—the saint having been a man gifted by God with miraculous power, not necessarily on account of great piety, but oftener as a compensation for harmless and innocent imbecility. The [174] ancient Egyptians also had their patrons and protectors, namely, special divinities or forms and varieties of such for 796 particular cities. In Upper Egypt the chief festival is that of the Sheikh Abder-Rahim at Keneh; it is for Upper Egypt [184] what the celebrated fair at Tantah is for Lower Egypt. The latter is evidently a continuation of the ancient Egyptian feast [778] of Diana at Bubastis, or is analogous to it. From the beginning of the month onwards some bustle prevails round the temple

541 the festival. Upon a wheeled conveyance, and adorned with flags and ribbons, a small boat is pulled along, the property of the saint, and at other times hung up in his mausoleum. In it he is said to have from time to time made journeys by sea and river. The end of the procession is formed by camels [534] bearing huge kettle-drums, which the rider belabours with a mighty drum-stick. Behind these, lastly, comes the crowd of people extending as far as the eye can reach. Thus they march away, often to some spot leagues distant in the desert, and after making the round of the town appear before the serail of the governor. This solemn moment, which does not take place till towards evening, is proclaimed by the thunder of ordnance. At some places the firing takes place at the start of the procession. With the replacing of the arks in 796 the temple of their sainted owners the festivities come to an end, and next morning all the people are again in their working clothes.

EASTER WEEK.

It is remarkable that the bigoted Mohammedans celebrate, at least in Egypt, some days in common with the native Christians, though certainly in a peculiar and by no means Christian manner. To these belong especially the days about Easter. On Palm Sunday (*hadd el chus*) the women bind palm ● [788] twigs round their heads and fingers. On the Monday fol- [262] lowing people eat *fagus* (a kind of cucumber) along with caraway; on Tuesday, whey with onions, this day being accordingly called "whey and onion day" (*gum el mish u el basal*). The Wednesday is universally known by the name of Job's Wednesday (*arba Ayub*). On this day the plant *ghubera* (*Inula arabica?*) said to Job in his illness, "Wash thyself with my juice, and thou wilt recover;" he did recover, [824] and on this day it is customary for all the Egyptians to wash [783] themselves with the *ghargharah Ayub*. Maunday Thursday has become "pea-Thursday." Good Friday is called among [262] the Mohammedans, "cake and butter Friday" (*guma'a el mafruka*), cakes spread with butter and honey being the special dainty on this day.

special dainty on this day. Saturday is named "the Sabbath 796
of the light," from the celebrated sacred fire, which on this [778]
day bursts forth in the Greek Church of the Sepulchre at
Jerusalem, and on this account the Christian brethren there
annually get up a spectacle, which often terminates in deadly
blows and renders the intervention of the Turkish, and con-
sequently Mohammedan soldiery necessary. On this day
the Mohammedan faithful strengthen their eyes with eye- [826]
powders; everybody has a vein opened, or gets himself cupped,
a custom which prevails in many places in the West also, and [757]
in Egypt, Mohammedan as it is, coloured Easter eggs are
also eaten. People take *kishk*, that is, a decoction of wheat
with sourmilk, boil it with eggs, and stick it with the [789]
coloured shells of the eggs above the doors to adorn the
entrance for all time coming and ward off spirits. On Easter
Sunday the "great feast of the Christians" (*ʿid en-nusâra*)
these hold a grand reception, with sherbet and holiday gifts, [574]
the Mohammedans in a friendly and neighbourly way call
upon the Christians as the latter did upon them during
Bairam. The Easter Monday of the Copts, whose festivals
are settled by the Greek calendar, is the universal spring [805]
festival for the adherents of both religions. The night before
onions, beans, and a bouquet of roses are laid under the bed- [788] ●
cushions and slept upon. On Easter Monday the onions are
crushed and stuck with some water on the door; the beans
are stuck on the bar, and the roses are used as a nosegay.
At the first streak of daylight everybody moves abroad, this
being the day of *shimm en-nezim*, that is, "air-smelling," or
more poetically "sipping the zephyr." People go to the
gardens or other attractive spots, and pass, if possible, the
whole day there. At the most-frequented places sellers of [443]
coffee, sherbet, buza, and cooked meats establish them-
selves. A company of friends may take an Easter lamb with
them, kill it at the rendezvous they have selected, and pre-
pare *tanur*, that is, they cut up the meat in several pieces [252]
and bake it in an improvised earth-oven; or they make
shauirma, that is, the whole lamb with the skin and hair on [521]
is placed on a spit and roasted at the fire. The day is spent [526]

789

789 MAGIC--practices reflecting confidence in the ability to manipulate supernatural forces; magical techniques of weather control (e.g., rain making); magical rites for increasing the food supply; exorcistic practices (e.g., driving off evil spirits with noise); potent formulas, incantations, and spells; curses; miracles; prevalent types of magic (e.g., imitative, contagious); concept of magical force; functions and social significance of magic; nonsupernatural magic (e.g., wonder-working, jugglery, legerdemain, fire-walking); etc. See also:

Magical rites in the food quest	22	Magic rites at funerals	764
Magic rites in agriculture	24	Luck magic	777
Magic rites in the reproductive cycle	84	Concept of mana	778
Magic as entertainment	545	Prevalence of nonlogical reasoning	811
Magic rites in warfare	726	Relation of magic to science	813
Sorcery, witchcraft, and evil eye	754	Love magic	832
Therapeutic magic	751, 755		

BIRTH, INFANCY AND EARLY TRAINING

The carrying out of a 'kaboos'—presenting oneself uninvited, secretly and suddenly at a 'place'—is another device to induce pregnancy. An old woman, or a young non-menstruating girl, is asked to collect some maize seeds from seven married women, who have been the only wives of their husbands. The old woman puts the maize into a pot to be cooked in the oven overnight. The woman who desires to become pregnant goes to visit, as if unexpected, the old woman, who presents her with the pot to walk over seven times, and then washes her private parts with the water at home. 842

Sometimes a woman desirous of pregnancy pawns her jewellery to a woman who is not menstruating, and asks her to put it underneath her pillow while sleeping for some nights. This woman does so and then puts the jewels in a pot filled with water. The first woman comes to visit her and to step over the pot seven times, followed by a wash similar to the previous one.

In the case of a newly-married girl who does not conceive, the ceremony of marriage is often re-enacted in the house but on a smaller scale by non-menstruating women in the same way as during the actual ceremony. The wife makes two dolls, one representing herself, and another the bridegroom. Only female friends and relatives are invited and the doll bride and bridegroom are tucked up in bed. This is supposed to relieve the wife from the first marriage shock which may have caused her inability to conceive.[1]

These are a few examples of the ways to which women resort for inducing pregnancy, and they all imply producing a psychological state for the attainment of release and embodying the sublime folly of hope found in magical rites.[2] In such practices, one can regard the connection between economic fertility symbols (earth, maize, jewellery, sand, water) and women's fertility as some survivals of reincarnation beliefs. Although in some of these practices one might get the impression of an atonement for a woman's evil intention (sense of guilt), the emphasis, as I gathered from my informants, was the 'evil eye' of others or their manœuvres to cause such sterility or 'binding'. Out of the sixteen methods collected, ten of them explicitly indicate accusation of others for such a state, a mechanism which some psychologists call 'projecting repressed hostility'. 842 154 [753]

Although a pregnant woman is theoretically advised not to work hard or carry heavy things during the ninth month, one often hears of women in childbirth who have just returned from the Nile (i.e. water-carrying), 844 [843]

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[1] According to Frazer's analysis of magic, this could be considered as imitative magic, by performing what one desires to happen in actuality. To the same category belongs the taboo on pregnant women, especially after the seventh month, with regard to spinning, as the child might get entangled in her womb. In Silwa, contagious magic also exists in the so-called 'taking the smell of somebody' (riha), especially in cases of harm done through the evil eye, where a part of the 'envier's' clothes is taken and burnt with salt, to dispel his or her evil effects. 789 ● [843] [755]

[2] B. Malinowski, 'Magic, Science and Religion', in *Science, Religion and Reality*, edited by J. A. Needham, London, 1936.

443
454 carefully put by amount to a considerable total, which may be profitably invested. Thanks to a lucky deal in cotton, or some other venture, the former humble itinerant vendor finds himself well on the way to becoming a man of substance.

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● 789
531
554 The house-doors are often decorated with a china plate or saucer fixed into the masonry above the lintel, as a charm against the evil eye. A house may also be decorated with coloured line-drawings of camels, boats, trains, trees, and other objects, some hardly identifiable. Such artistic efforts denote that one or more members of the family inhabiting the house have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, the design representing the various objects seen by the pilgrim on his way to the sacred city.

[363]
[137]
[342]
[291]

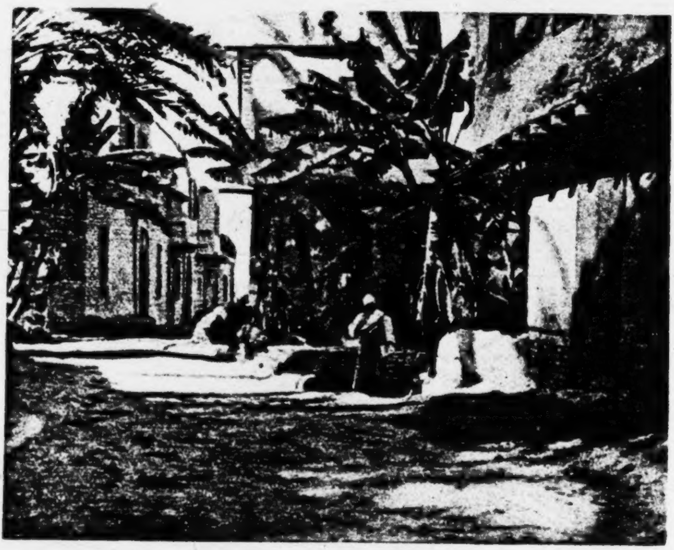

FIG. 9. A VILLAGE STREET

744 The interiors of the villages are often very picturesque, in spite of the dirt and squalor usually found in them. The Arabs are far more particular in this respect, their villages and settlements being much cleaner in every way than those of the Egyptian peasants. This difference between the two races is so marked that I can almost always tell if a village is Arab or Egyptian directly I enter it.

000 A mosque is to be found in every village, and in many places

for sore eyes, fever, and other complaints. The canal, according 312
to the peasants, was made in a miraculous way by the patriarch 823
Joseph (Yūsuf). They relate that he started one day to walk from 755
Deirūṭ, where the Baḥr el-Yūsuf (Canal of Joseph) diverges from 773
the Ibrahimīyeh Canal, and as he went he trailed his stick behind him. Water began to flow along the course marked by his stick until he came to the lake Ḳarūn, at the
north-west side of Fayūm Province, and into this lake the numerous streams in 0911 516
which the Baḥr terminates disgorge themselves. Owing to this
belief regarding the origin of the canal, 823 789
its water is believed to contain much *barakeh* (blessing, healing virtues, good luck), and accordingly, on the day of *Shemm en-Nesīm*, which coincides with the Coptic Easter Monday, the men make a point of bathing in the canal, for on this occasion the water is believed to be endowed with *barakeh* to a special degree.

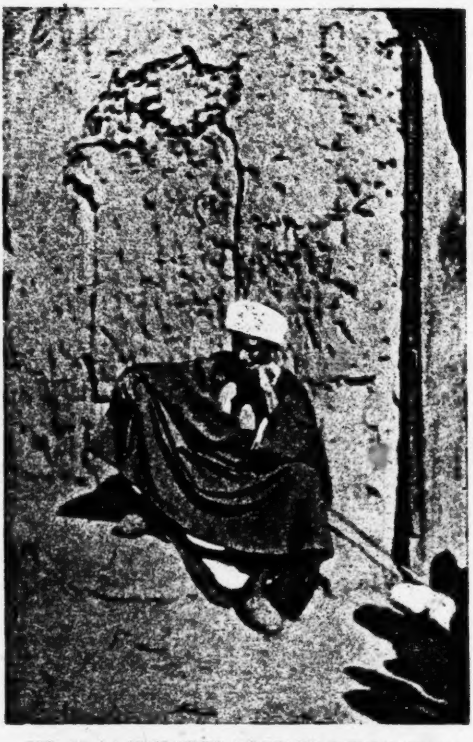

FIG. 12. A MAN WITH A ROSARY SITTING ON A MAṢṬABEH

The following is another tradition connected with the Baḥr el- 773
Yūsuf.[1] It is a translation from an Arabic manuscript. "Joseph, to whom may Allah show mercy and grant peace, when he was Prime Minister of Egypt and high in favour with Raiyan, his

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[1] Quoted by Sir R. H. Brown, K.C.M.G., R.E., in *The Fayûm and Lake Moeris* (London, 1892), pp. 22–24.

THE FELLĀḤIN OF UPPER EGYPT

152 593 I fancy that there was really no just cause for the woman's jealous suspicions. However, she has reduced her husband to a state of abject fear lest he may arouse her anger—though I did hear that on one occasion he had plucked up sufficient courage to exercise his 'rights' as a husband, and so had administered a whipping for some fault she had committed!

462 241 With regard to the division of labour among the sexes, the men certainly have the hardest and largest share, the most strenuous work in the fields being invariably done by them. The women and girls join their menfolk in the cultivation after the sun has risen, but their work is usually confined to the gathering of dry roots, tending the cattle, fetching the water for the household (Fig. 16), and so on. Of course, living is simple among the peasants, so that very strenuous work for the women is not necessary. Much, however, that might be done by them is neglected simply because they are without training in domestic duties and do not realize what important work lies to their hands.

462 515 It is, of course, very difficult for the peasants to be as clean as they should be. All the water has to be fetched by the women, often from some distance. No water is laid on in the villages, no bathrooms exist, and the houses lack the most ordinary domestic offices. Excuses must, therefore, be made for the Egyptian women, who have had none of the advantages of the poorest
[179] woman in England. The instinct of the Egyptian *fellāḥīn*, however, is to be clean, and the religion of Islām commands ablutions. A man will almost instinctively strip and bathe if he happens to
[834] be near a canal or the river, but this privilege is denied to the women, as modesty forbids their bathing in public.

854 562 One of the most crying needs in Egypt is that both girls and women should have instruction in the care and upbringing of children. The children undergo a great deal of unnecessary suffering during the early years of their infancy; not because their mothers are lacking in affection, for Egyptian women are, as a rule, devoted mothers, but because they are so hopelessly ignorant.

[164] The results of such ignorance more often than not leave an indelible mark on the child, such as defective eyesight or even absolute blindness. To prevent or cure disease in their children the women
854 789 755 will go to one magician after another and purchase from them amulets and written charms, not grudging for a moment the expenditure of what may be to them considerable sums of money.

[Text continues on page 42]

854 789 755 Numbers of these prophylactics may be seen hanging from the necks of the hapless infants.

755 854 164 The various primitive medicinal remedies, well known to, and used by, all village matrons, are of such a nature that one wonders how any child manages to survive at all. Most of the women have a deeply rooted objection to going to a doctor for advice, supposing one to be available in the neighbourhood; and I have found it hard work to overcome this prejudice, even in the case of people who know me well and who have every confidence in me. [144] It is encouraging to hear that the Egyptian Government has recently allocated a certain sum of money for the purpose of starting baby-welfare centres. If only these institutions can be got into good working order, and can be utilized for the purpose of training young girls in the proper care and management of children, it will be a big step in the right direction, will ensure a much stronger and healthier peasantry, and will put an end to a vast amount of unnecessary suffering. During the years I have lived among these people I have had hundreds of sick children of all ages brought to me, and it has been heartbreaking to realize, as having had no medical training I inevitably must, that I am quite incapable of dealing with the terrible diseases from which they are often suffering. [784] [515] As will be seen in some of the subsequent chapters, a great deal of this sickness is due to superstition—taboos against washing, for instance, being very strict.

743 758 177 164 Much good has, of course, been done by the dispensaries, which in the past were run by Englishwomen; but they are naturally limited in number, and the mothers will often defer taking their children there for advice and medicine till it is almost too late, or, at any rate, till the child has become very ill indeed. I myself had the privilege of seeing something of what was accomplished by an English lady at one of these dispensaries during the first three or four years that I resided in Egypt. I can bear witness to the splendid work she did, and I know how much she was loved and respected by the hundreds of poor women who brought their children to her for treatment. I am sure, from what I have heard of similar institutions in other parts of the country, that the same good work has been done by many others in the different provinces. The number of these dispensaries is not great enough to meet the crying need, and those that do exist have to be supported by funds from the Government, for they receive practically no support, so

solid round band, or of silver or gold. The ornaments of the less 301 wealthy peasants are usually made of cheap materials, though some women may be lucky enough to possess one gold or silver bracelet.

In some parts of Egypt, at any rate, the unmarried girl is not 554 supposed to wear many bracelets at once, and her ornaments [882] generally are not so numerous or so massive as those of the married 301 woman. However, when she is anxious to marry she will somewhat overload herself with jewellery, cheap or otherwise, and, not content with her ear- and nose-rings and her somewhat massive necklace, she often hangs gold, silver, or brass ornaments from the kerchief which she ties round her head, the latter ornaments being attached in such a way that they hang over her forehead.

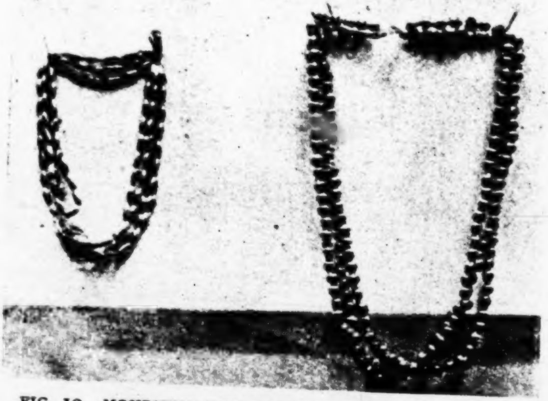

FIG. 19. MOURNING NECKLACES OF DARK BLUE BEADS

[765]

In some parts of Egypt a girl on becoming a bride may don such a number of glass bracelets of various colours that they completely cover both arms from wrist to elbow! Silver or white metal bracelets of particular design may also now be worn by her. I was told in Asyūṭ Province that unmarried girls are never allowed to wear this type of bracelet, which is thus a means of indicating social status.

A red heart-shaped ornament, attached either to a silver chain or 301 to a necklace of red beads, is worn by women suffering from sheikh-possession.[1] 789 ● A necklace of light blue beads, or even a single bead [787] of this colour, is often worn as a charm against the evil eye. It will thus be seen from these two examples—and there are many others—that ornaments may have a utilitarian as well as a decorative value.

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[1] See Chapter XI.

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

765 301 When a woman's husband dies one of the first things she does is to take off all her jewellery—nose-ring, earrings, finger-rings, gold, silver, or brass bracelets—wearing instead a necklace of dark blue or black beads (Fig. 19) and sometimes blue or black earrings and bracelets. The nose-ring is discarded for good, unless she marries again.

682 765 301 Knowledge of this custom is sometimes very useful. I was calling on a certain Captain of Police one day and happened to arrive at the moment when he was investigating a case of murder. An old man had been waylaid not far from his village and killed, but all his fellow-villagers declared that they knew nothing whatever about it. The wife, a son by a former marriage, and some other relations had been locked up pending investigations. The wife, very negroid [142] in type, as, indeed, were many of the people of her village, was, together with her stepson, undergoing examination when I arrived. The officer strongly suspected that the wife was implicated, and possibly the stepson also. The woman was much younger than her husband, who was, for a *fellāḥ*, a man of some substance. I watched the woman carefully while she was being questioned, and she certainly was far from prepossessing in appearance. On looking more closely I noticed that she was still wearing all her ornaments of gold and other materials, including her nose-ring. If she had really cared anything about her unfortunate husband she would have removed them immediately upon hearing that he was dead. I asked my friend the Captain of Police if he had noticed this, and then pointed out to him how many ornaments she was still wearing. He was delighted with this piece of evidence, which had quite escaped his notice, and which certainly went to confirm his suspicion. This incident shows that a knowledge of personal adornment, and of the customs associated with certain ornaments, may be quite useful to officials who are concerned with criminal investigation among the *fellāḥīn*.

304 554 789 Among the *fellāḥīn* it is usually the custom to pierce one ear of a young boy if he is an only son, and in this ear he wears a decorative ring (Fig. 20). When he gets older he discards the ring, but the perforation is always visible. No reason was given for this custom, but I suspect it is most likely a method of protection against the evil eye, and is possibly regarded as a means of disguising his sex.

000 Tattooing is another form of personal decoration. It is popular

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

F 304 ●789 If a woman has lost several children in succession, when another one arrives she has it tattooed with a small dot in the centre of its forehead and another on the outer side of the left ankle. She F [776] believes that after this the child will live, because her *ḳarīneh*, seeing these marks, will not attempt to take her child.[1] The belief is that when King David had the interview with the queen of the *aḳrān* described in the following chapter she promised that any child that had these tattoo marks on the forehead and ankle should not be injured by its mother's *ḳarīneh*.

F 304 755 753 776 One man, who was a village guard far south in Upper Egypt, had a fish tattooed on the inner side of one arm, near the wrist. He told me that it was done some years before, when he was possessed by an ʿ*afrīt*, that it quite cured him, and that he had never been troubled in that way since. This fish mark does not always serve a curative purpose, for in a village much farther north I saw F [531] a boy with a similar design tattooed on the back of one of his hands, and he assured me that it was done only as an ornament.

F C 304 787 Most of the Copts have a cross tattooed on the inner sides of the wrists. There is a belief among some, if not all, of those Copts belonging to the *fellāḥīn* class that the Abyssinians will one day conquer Egypt, and will kill all the Copts as well as the Muslims if they (the Copts) cannot show this sign on their wrists. The Copts will, it is said, hold up their hands, thus exposing to view the sign of their religion.

F C 304 531 788 One Coptic friend of mine, a man of good position, showed me some tattoo marks on his arm. There was an elaborate pattern on the inner side of his arm, below which were tattooed the dates of the two occasions on which he had gone on pilgrimages to Jerusalem—1911 and 1914. Another Copt told me that his little sister also had the year of her visit to Jerusalem tattooed on one arm, and that in future the year of each succeeding pilgrimage that she made to the sacred city would be similarly recorded. His mother, who had performed the pilgrimage on several occasions, had had each year of this event tattooed on one of her arms. Tattooing can thus be a means of record-keeping.

F 304 463 The operation of tattooing is an exceedingly painful one, and has very often unpleasant results, though the discomfort may be only temporary. One of my servants, a young man of about twenty-two years of age, was very anxious to have the back of his right hand tattooed this year. A specialist in the art was usually

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[1] See pp. 69 ff. for explanation of *ḳarīneh*.

304 and with them it is possibly a racial mark, but the following information was given to me by an Egyptian woman whom I questioned on the subject. Among the *fellāḥīn* the notches are cut
755 when there is supposed to be something wrong with the inside of a child's mouth, and the operation is performed in babyhood. A midwife acts as the surgeon in such cases. She cuts the notch, or notches, with a pair of scissors, and the blood from the wound is rubbed on the roof of the child's mouth. If the mouth is very bad more than one notch is cut.

302 Long hair is certainly considered a woman's glory in Egypt, though I have rarely, if ever, seen really thick, long hair among the *fellāḥīn* women and girls. However, this defect is easily remedied, and every woman buys long plaits of false hair, which hang down far below her waist. She cuts her hair short on either side of her face, and forms this short hair into flat curls against her cheeks. Over her head she ties a silk or cotton kerchief, a brightly coloured one if she is young, a more sombre one if she has passed her youth, and this keeps the side curls in position. The hair is not dressed every day, but when it is done a double wooden
412 comb is used (Fig. 26), with fine and coarse teeth. The centre of the comb is usually decorated with coloured designs.

412

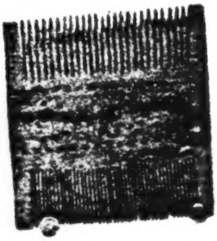

FIG. 26. DOUBLE WOODEN COMB

789
832
302 The long plaits worn by the peasant women are utilitarian as well as decorative. The house-door key is often attached to one of the plaits when the housewife goes off either to shop or to the fields, while from the others hang various charms, some of which are enclosed in small leather cases. One woman I know wore a charm against headache enclosed in a leather case, and also a large opaque bead to keep her husband's love and to make his mother pleased with her. Both these charms were attached to one of her plaits, and she gave me the bead after her husband died.

765
589
302 When a woman becomes a widow she immediately conceals the side curls; in fact, no hair must be seen round her face—it is tucked away under a dark blue or a black kerchief. She wears it like this all her life, unless she remarries, in which case the curls

CHAPTER IV

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

CHILDREN occupy a very important place in Egyptian 842 society, as will be seen in Chapter VI, which is concerned with the numerous methods employed by women to ensure their producing offspring.

When a woman becomes pregnant she often hangs up in various 843 rooms in her house pictures of legendary persons who are renowned 789 not only for physical beauty, but also for their loving and gentle disposition. The expectant mother believes that if she constantly looks at such pictures the child to be born will resemble them in face and character. Anything and everything that she gazes at for any length of time is believed by her to affect her unborn child.[1] The first year that I visited Egypt I was on more than one occasion somewhat embarrassed by the numbers of women who would sit or stand around me when I happened to be visiting a village, staring at me without moving their eyes from my face. I was afterward told by my servant, who always accompanied me and assisted me greatly in my work, that these women were all expectant mothers and desired to have babies resembling me in face—hence the rigid stares ! Since then I have frequently been gazed at in this manner, but have now quite lost my first feelings of embarrassment.

" Ah," said one woman when thus engaged in studying my features, " if I had a girl like her I could marry her for a thousand pounds ! "

" Look well, O girl," replied my servant, " and if you are in a state of yearning you may have one like her ! "

For a similar reason most women in this condition will endeavour 843 to avoid ugly or unpleasant sights or people, fearing that their unborn infants may be thereby adversely affected. If a pregnant woman should see a dead person, man, woman, or child of either sex, and not take the necessary precautions, it is the generally

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[1] This is also a common belief in England.

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

If a midwife is called in to assist at a birth she brings with 844 her the customary confinement chair (Fig. 28); for women in Egypt give birth in a squatting attitude. [352] If this professional assistance is not required the woman squats without the chair, resting her arms on, and pressing upon, a sieve which stands on its side (Fig. 29). She leans forward on the sieve even if she squats on the chair. The sieve, which is a large one such as is employed in winnowing, plays quite an important part in all the birth ceremonies, as will be seen later.

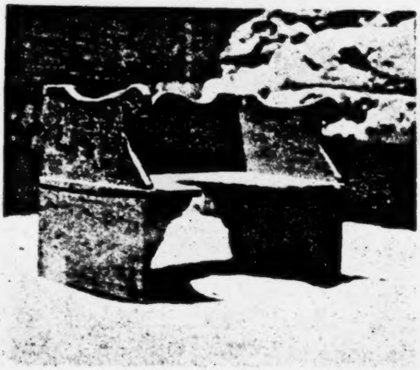

FIG. 28. CONFINEMENT CHAIR

It is the business of the female attendant or midwife, as the case may be, to cut the umbilical cord. The afterbirth is dealt with in a variety of ways. In many parts, if not all over Egypt, it is often called *el-walad et-tāni* (the other, or second, child), and some people regard it as an unfinished infant. [789] If a woman is anxious to make sure of [842] having another child she buries the placenta of the latest-born under the threshold of her house. She does this in order that when she desires to have another child she may be able to step over the buried placenta three, five, or seven times; for the belief is [774] that its spirit will then re-enter her body, to be born again as a complete child in due course.

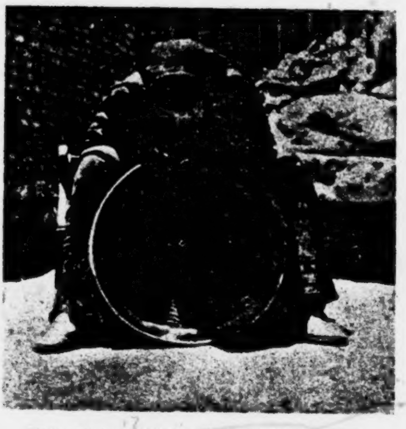

FIG. 29. WOMAN LEANING ON SIEVE

If a woman has lost several children in succession at birth she 000

845 If a woman has lost several children in succession at birth she
776 thinks that somehow or other she has incurred the anger of her
774 *ukht* or *ḳarīneh*, or both, and that they have taken the children
away from her. She therefore consults a female magician, who
791 gets into communication with these subterranean beings, and the
787 mother inquires what she has done to make either or both of them
776 angry. If the reply is that she has angered one or both of them
774 she must then bring bread made of wheat flour, of which both she
845 and the magician must partake. When the latter eats the bread it is as though the *ukht* and *ḳarīneh* ate it, for they eat it through her. After this ceremonial eating of the bread these beings make peace with the mother and tell her that the next time she gives birth to a child, and on all subsequent occasions, she is to act in the following way. She must bury the placenta, together with a round, bun-shaped loaf of bread, made of wheat flour, called *khubz*, and a *raṭl* (rather more than 1 lb.) of salt, in a bowl (Fig. 30), covered by another bowl of the same shape, under the floor of her house. By this means the *ukht* and *ḳarīneh* are appeased and will not take the woman's children from her.

[915]

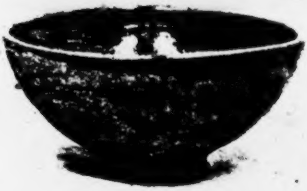

FIG. 30. JAR IN WHICH THE PLACENTA, TOGETHER WITH BREAD AND SALT, IS BURIED UNDER THE FLOOR

844 If a woman's new-born children have survived birth the midwife, or a female relative or friend, throws the afterbirth into the Nile or into a canal. As she does this, however, she must laugh or smile, for then the child will always be happy and cheerful. If, on the other hand, she neglects her duty in this respect the child will always have an unhappy disposition.

●789 Some mothers, in order to ensure long life to their children, will take a small piece of the umbilical cord and wrap it in a cotton wick. This they put in a pottery saucer-lamp filled with oil, light it, place it in a little boat, and leave it to float down the stream. Others again—and this is a very common practice—will take a short length of the cord and sew it up in a strip of cotton material, which is then hung by a string from the child's neck. After a short time this, together with certain other charms to be mentioned presently, is sewn up in one of the small leather charm-cases, and must be worn throughout life. It is usual to hang

such a charm from the neck, the charm-case hanging under the 789
right arm. I am told that a small piece of the placenta is sometimes used in this way instead of the cord, but so far I have not come across this usage myself.

Another method employed to prolong a child's life is the follow- 845
ing. If a Muslim woman has had several children who have all 789
died in early infancy, when another is born she asks a Coptic 777
woman to give her *barakeh* (blessing, good luck), in order that the newly born child may live. The *barakeh* she asks for is either a part of a dress which has been worn by the Coptic woman or her husband, or else a dress which has belonged to one of their children. The dress *must* be that of a Christian, not of a Muslim. Among the Copts this custom does not exist. I asked why a Muslim should ask for the dress of a Christian, and I was told it was because they are good people.

A woman who has lost several children and wishes to ensure that the newly born infant will live acts as follows. She carries
her baby in her arms, and, with a basket made of palm-leaves [285]
on her head,[1] goes from house to house begging for *ḥaseneh* [482]
(charity) for her child. She will do this however rich she may be, behaving as if she were a very poor woman. Some people may
give her money, others *battaw* or *khubz* (two kinds of bread) [431]
and other articles of food. She will then distribute these gifts among the poor people of the village, even if she be as poor as they. She believes that, as the result of this action, God, or her *ḳarîneh*, will allow her to keep her child.

On many different occasions women have brought their babies 789
to me with the request that I would spit into their mouths, in order 854
to give them *barakeh* and make them live long! Also I found that 123
many of my old clothes that I had thrown away were torn up, and small pieces of them given to various mothers in the village, who hung them on their babies as charms to prolong life. One expectant
mother came and begged me to let her have one of my old [849]
frocks, in order that her child might be born on to it! She, poor thing, did not get her request granted, and I regret to say that her baby died very soon after birth!

Some women kill a puppy at the seventh month of their preg- 843
nancy. The puppy is killed over a cloth, on to which the blood 789
flows. As soon as the child is born it is wrapped in this blood- 825

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[1] The ordinary basket, called *maḳṭaf*.

843 stained cloth. When the puppy is killed its head is cut off and
●789 is pickled in salt, and it is worn by the expectant mother till
825 after the birth of the child, when it is transferred from her to the
infant. My informant, a clever, well-educated Egyptian lady, told
me that this is done because dogs are regarded as very unclean
[774 animals in Egypt, and that therefore the mother's *ḳarīneh* would
not come near her unborn child so long as she was wearing the
776] puppy's head; and for the same reason the child will not be
attacked or injured by its mother's *ḳarīneh* while it wears this
charm.

789 Another protective charm, worn by an expectant mother if all
843 her children have died before they have attained the age of seven
761 years, consists of the head of a hoopoo, a *ḍufr*[1] of a snake, a small
[825] piece of the under lip and of the ear of a dead donkey, a *nāb*
(double tooth) of a camel, a *ḥirbāyeh* (chameleon), and a written
charm. All these are hung under her right arm while she is
pregnant. After her confinement the child wears these charms.

I saw a set of these charms which had been worn by a woman during the last two months of her pregnancy, only in addition to the above-mentioned articles there were seven threads of silk, which may be of any colour. While the expectant mother was wearing these charms they were divided into two packets, each done up in cotton material. When I saw them they had been transferred to her child, and had all been put together into a raw hide case. The child must wear this until death, and it is supposed to ensure it a long life.

It is the custom in many parts of Egypt for a mother to wear an iron anklet if she has lost all, or most of, her children; or one of her surviving children may wear the iron anklet, which, it is believed, will protect the next child that is born. The photograph (Fig. 31) shows two such anklets which I obtained from villages in Middle and Upper Egypt.

845 If a woman has arrived at the time for her delivery, and she
suffers much, but cannot give birth, she may sometimes crawl under
[825] the body of a camel seven times backward and forward, after which
performance the child is born. The woman crawls from side to
side of the camel, so I was told, not between its hind-legs.

If a birth is delayed for three days, and the woman is in constant pain, her husband must wash his right heel and she must drink

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[1] The word means 'nail' or 'claw,' but here, perhaps, a 'horn' of a cerastes.

the water in which he washed it. Then he must walk round the 845
village seven times, and while he thus perambulates he must not speak to anyone. If a passer-by salutes him in the usual way he must reply by touching his forehead with his hand, but he must not speak.

Immediately this walk is accomplished the child will be born.

It is said that a protracted birth never occurs if the husband and wife are both good people, but even if only one of them is bad it may still occur.

If a woman has one miscarriage after another she places the last-born embryo in a niche in the wall inside the house. She takes a red brick—*i.e.*, a brick that has been baked in a kiln, not sun-baked only — and pounds it into powder. She then mixes honey with this powder and eats some of the mixture every day for seven days. At the end of this period she takes the embryo and puts it in a bath, into which she steps, and, squatting over the embryo, she washes herself all over her body. The belief is that the spirit of the embryonic child will enter her body again, and that she will immediately conceive. It is necessary, however, that she and her
husband should have marital relations directly after she has had [833]
the bath. The body of the embryo is put back into the niche in the wall after she has had the bath and before marital relations take place. It remains there always, but soon falls into dust.

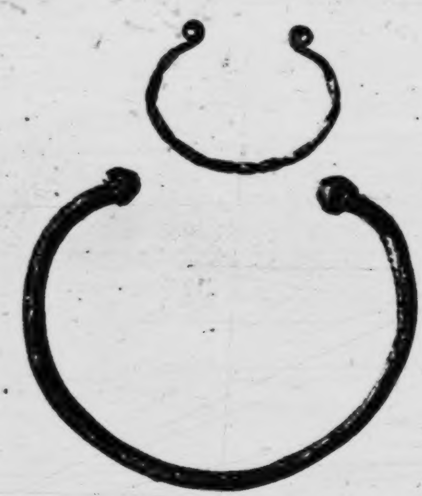

FIG. 31. IRON ANKLETS

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[789]
[843]
[761]

When a child is born it is said that a new star appears in the 843
sky. When the child dies, whether in infancy or at any later period, 821
its star falls. Hence the falling stars.[1] The sta[illegible]lls two or three 761

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[1] The same belief is current in some parts of [illegible]gland.

F
843 minutes after the death of the person to whom it belongs. Another
821 explanation of falling stars is that they are darts aimed by God
761 at unbelievers. Lane says[1] that they are believed to be darts
F 776 thrown by God at evil *ginn*, usually called *'afārīt*.

F
Certain precautions must be taken by a woman after she has
846 given birth to a child. A woman who has lately lost her baby must
not enter the room where a woman is being confined, nor for seven
F days after this event. If this taboo is broken the woman who was
853 last confined will have no milk for her baby.

F
761 If a cat gives birth to kittens which all die, and a woman gives
895 birth to a child in the same house in which the cat had its kittens,
853 the cat must be taken away from the house or the baby may die.
825 Or, if it lives, the mother will have no milk.

F
Near a small village in Asyūṭ Province there is a stone, roughly
● 789 conical in shape, standing in the fields, and surrounded by whatever
853 crops are being cultivated on that spot. It is said that men
778 have often tried to dig it up, excavating to a considerable depth all round it, but no one has ever been able to come to the bottom of the stone. It is believed by the peasants to be very ancient. A certain mystery is attached to it because of these beliefs, thereby doubtless enhancing its magical value. Women who have not enough milk with which to nurse their children visit this stone on a Friday. They must not speak when coming to and going away from the spot, and they should step over it, still preserving absolute silence, seven times. After this, it is believed, they will have no difficulty in suckling their infant. I was told that the stone has been visited for this purpose, among others, for a hundred years or more.

F
846 If a woman or child brings meat to a house where there is a
262 woman who has a child under seven days old that person must
789 not go into the mother's room, but the latter must come out of
853 her room and step over the meat three times. If she does not do
this she will have no milk.

F
When a woman who is a Christian, whether Copt, Protestant,
846 or of any other denomination, has given birth to a child her
854 relatives take some wheat flour and mix it with water. Out of
776 this dough they make several crosses, sticking them on the walls
779 of the room occupied by the mother and child. The greatest
789

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[1] *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London, 1871), vol. i, p. 283.

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number of crosses is placed in that part of the room where the child lies. It is believed that by this means no *'afārīt* can come near the child and that the mother's *ḳarīneh* cannot injure it.

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Every human being is said to be born with a double, which is quite distinct from the *'afrīt*,[1] and it is called, in the case of a man, the *ḳarīn* (colleague, companion), in the case of a woman *ḳarīneh*. The man is always born with his male, as is the woman with her female, counterpart, according to the prevailing belief among most of the *fellāḥīn*. The *ginn*, or *'afārīt*, are often called "our brothers and sisters beneath the earth," but they are separate beings from the *aḳrān* (plural of *ḳarīn*), though the two communities are in touch with each other.

The *aḳrān* are believed to be of different colours, some being white, some black; their looks also vary, as some are beautiful and some are ugly. This belief is easily accounted for, as each person's *ḳarīn* is a facsimile of himself or herself, and doubtless the colours are racial distinctions. The *aḳrān* are not, I believe, always malevolent, though stories of their mischief-making propensities are commoner than accounts of their good deeds.

F
[753]

Not only do the *aḳrān* resemble their prototypes on earth in person, but also in character—in fact, they faithfully reflect in themselves all the actions, both good and bad, of their earthly duplicates. Thus, if a man or woman gets into a temper his or her double does the same; if he or she suffers pain and sickness, so does his *ḳarīn* or her *ḳarīneh*. This point was brought out clearly one day three years ago when a large number of women had come to see me and to have their eyes doctored. One of them was speaking about her *ḳarīneh*, so I said, "But your eyes are very bad now, what about those of your *ḳarīneh*?"

"Oh," she replied, "her eyes also are bad."

"Poor thing," I said. "But who is looking after her eyes?"

"Why, your *ḳarīneh*, *ginâb es-sitt* [honoured lady]," the woman immediately answered.

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The following is another example of the intimate connexion between a human being and his or her double. When an argument begins between two or more men or women and a mischievous bystander wants to lead them into a real quarrel he will take two bricks and place them on their ends, each tilted against the other, or he will take off one of his shoes and place it on the

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[1] See p. 237.

789 ground upside down—*i.e.*, with the sole uppermost. This will
579 make the disputants quarrel violently, and finally they will resort
776 to blows. As soon as the bricks are taken apart or the shoe
774 replaced on the foot of its owner the quarrelling will stop. My
informant himself had witnessed an experiment of this kind. A friend of his, seeing two men arguing in the cultivation, placed one of his shoes, sole upward, on the ground. The disputants immediately started a violent quarrel, hitting out and striking each other. Then the friend replaced the shoe on his foot, and at once the quarrel ceased.

The belief is that when people start quarrelling their *aḳrān* come up above the ground and quarrel also. They are, of course, invisible, but they see the bricks or the shoe, as the case may be, and as long as the bricks remain together, or the shoe remains on the ground, they will continue to fight. As long as the *aḳrān* quarrel the people to whom they belong must quarrel too.

776 Again, a man's *ḳarīn* marries the *ḳarīneh* of his wife, and when
774 a man or woman dies his *ḳarīn* or her *ḳarīneh* dies also. I had
764 been informed of these facts several times, and the reality of the
585 belief was brought home to me in the following way. An Egyptian friend of mine died some three and a half years ago, and I was sitting with his wife one day after his death when a woman
791 magician came to pay us a visit. I suggested a *séance*, whereupon
787 the magician seated herself in a corner of the room and asked for
a blanket, with which she completely covered herself. Presently she clapped her hands two or three times, thus summoning her familiar and some of the *'afārīt*. They spoke to her, and after various messages from them had been conveyed to us through the magician my friend's wife asked her to inquire what had become of her husband's *ḳarīn*.

776 "Oh," was the reply, "he is dead also, and your *ḳarīneh* is a
774 widow."

The magician was something of a ventriloquist, and her voice changed completely when the subterranean beings spoke through her.

776 As I have stated above, the *aḳrān*, besides being like their human
774 prototypes in colouring and physical features, also resemble them
152 in character. Most of the Egyptian peasants are of a very jealous
disposition, and this quality is strongly marked among the women with regard to the possession of children. Childlessness is a real

Childlessness is a real

terror to them, and the more children they have the happier they 842
are. They are often very jealous of the offspring of another, and 554
therefore precautions are taken to protect the children from the [754]
ill effects of the evil eye, or eye of envy.[1] [152]

A woman's *ḳarîneh* may also be jealous of the human children,
in spite of the fact that if a child is born to a woman the *ḳarîn* 776
or *ḳarîneh* of that child represents the offspring of the mother's 774
ḳarîneh. Various measures are taken to safeguard the human 843
child from the possible machinations of its mother's double.
Indeed, the mother herself during her pregnancy must also be
protected, for her *ḳarîneh*, in a fit of jealousy, may come at night
while she sleeps and strike her "on the belly," thus causing premature birth. This is curious, as, presumably, the mother's
ḳarîneh would also lose her child. But, at any rate in some parts
of Egypt, the belief is that when a child dies it goes to the mother's [775]
ḳarîneh, who would in this way possess at least one child, even if
her own child (*i.e.*, the human child's double) died at the same
time as its human prototype.

Sometimes the *ḳarîneh* speaks roughly to the expectant mother,
but refrains from striking her. In such a case the woman will [791]
go at daybreak to see a magician or a sheikh, and will ask him
to write a protection for her. The protection (or written charm) is 789 ●
the agreement of the queen of the *aḳrān* with King David. For 773
it happened one day that David saw one of them unfasten her 776
hair, and fire was issuing from her mouth.

So he asked her, "What is your work?"

She answered, "If a woman is pregnant I come by night and strike her on her belly, so that she will give birth to a dead child. And if I do not do this, but allow her to bear the child safely, I may perchance come and strike the baby, or cause a snake to bite or a scorpion to sting it, so that it will die."

Then David said to her, "If this is your work I will kill you," and he spoke threateningly to her.

So she made an agreement with him and said, "If a mother carries your words on her person I will never do her harm."

So David consented to this suggestion and let her go on her way. 843
Therefore if a pregnant woman thinks that she has cause to fear 789
that her *ḳarîneh* will do her an injury she will apply for a charm
(*ḥigāb*) and wear it till her child is born, when she will give it to

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[1] See Chapter XIII.

843 the infant, hanging it round its neck till it is seven years old, after
● 789 which period it will be immune.

The *ḳarīneh* seen by King David was the queen of them all,
776 and the promise she gave is binding on all her subjects. She herself is not, according to my informant, the double of any human being ; she is by herself, and, like the king of the *aḳrān*, lives for ever.

796 A woman's *ḳarīneh* may do good or evil to her children till they
774 have passed the age of seven years She does harm, so I was told,
753 only if the mother has been doing something wrong, or has been
jealous of another. For instance, if the *ḳarīneh* clutches a child by the throat it means that the child's mother has been ill-tempered, and so on.

A man's *ḳarīn* does not affect his children ; it only affects him. If he should lose his temper with his wife or family, or with his friends, or does wrong in any way, and goes to bed unrepentant, he may wake up in the morning and find that some illness has attacked him. This has been caused by his *ḳarīn*. When he is
783 sorry and has expressed his repentance, or has called in a magician,
789 who will give him a charm to wear under his left arm, he will be cured.

753 If a child seems sickly and gets thinner and weaker every day
776 the mother knows that her *ḳarīneh* is trying to draw her child away
774 from her. Various methods are employed to mitigate this evil.
Near a small village in Asyūṭ Province there is a large stone which
778 is called the stone of the Sheikheh Fāṭimeh, who is believed to be
755 buried here. If a child is being drawn away by its mother's *ḳarīneh* the mother will take it on a Friday to this stone, near which she will place the child, she herself staying to watch over it. If the child goes to sleep quietly the mother knows that it will recover, but if it cries and refuses to sleep she takes it home again, knowing full well that it will shortly die. I have myself seen a child lying near the stone fast asleep, with its mother sitting by.

In a village in Middle Egypt there is an old, disused graveyard, crowned by the domed tomb of a celebrated local sheikh. The other graves are now fallen into ruin, and many of them show large, gaping hollows (Fig. 32). A woman whose child is affected by her *ḳarīneh* will take it and place it in one of these cavities, the results being the same as in the case of the stone of the Sheikheh Fāṭimeh. This is a common custom in many parts of Egypt.

776 Another example of kindness shown by a *ḳarīneh* to her human
779 prototype is described on p. 102 (see also p. 235).

● 789 The following is a translation of the written charm (Fig. 33)
843 worn by an expectant mother who has reason to fear harm being done to her offspring by her *ḳarīneh*. The charm is obviously Coptic, but it is used by Muslim mothers as well as by those professing Christianity. " In the Name of God of Triune nature, He is the Mighty Benefactor, Creator of all the powerful witches [evil women], Whom eye does not see and thought cannot conceive [mix with], Who knows what is before it is, before Whom the angels tremble with awe, and Whom the devils fear for His Power. All things in Heaven and on earth worship Him, and He is Ruler over all things. O God, by Thy Mighty Name and Powerful Arm and the Beneficent Light of Thy Face protect the bearer of this my charm—what is in her womb and who drinks [will drink] of her milk—from the devilish, cursed *ḳarīneh* by the power of this magic square and what of Thy Mighty Name it contains."

[539]

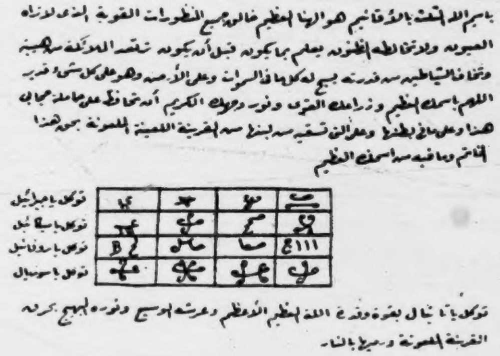


FIG. 33. CHARM AND CHARM SQUARE WORN BY AN EXPECTANT MOTHER

The probable meaning of the square in the illustration is, so I was told : " Make it your charge, O Gabrāīl, make it your charge, O Mikhāīl, make it your charge, O Rūfāīl, make it your charge, O Sūriyāl, make it your charge, O Māniyāl, by the power and might of the Mighty God, the Almighty, and His broad Throne, and His dazzling Light, to burn the cursed *ḳarīneh* and cast her into the fire."

776 There is another personality besides the *ḳarīn* or *ḳarīneh*, called
779 the *ukht* (sister), which is believed to be born simultaneously with each human being. There is, however, no ***akhkh*** (brother), but

and from what the woman said I fear that it was syphilis from which 854
he was suffering. Anyhow, she told me that if the father or 164
mother suffered in this way their children were never washed at 515
all until they were old enough to wash themselves. Two doctor friends of mine confirmed this, stating that they knew the practice to be a common one among the peasants. As for the child which was brought to me, I am glad to say that I at last persuaded the mother to wash it to a certain [292]
extent, and I gave her some medicine. This happened a few years ago, and on my visiting the same village again some time later I was glad to hear that the child was well and flourishing.

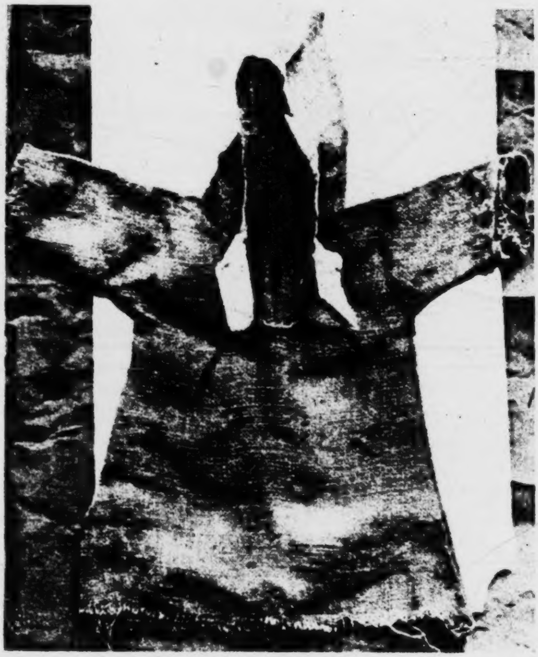
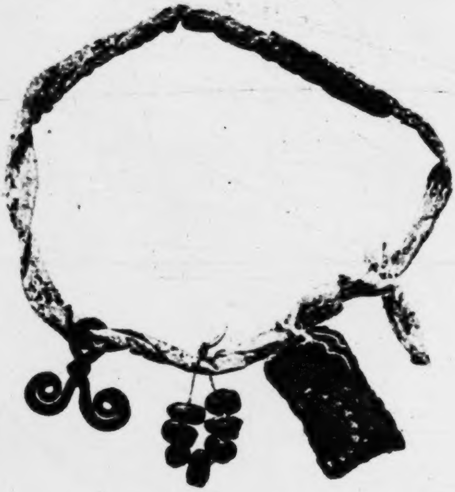


FIG. 35. FROCK AND HOOD MADE OF SACKING

The same woman had lost 165
several children 292
in early infancy before this particular infant was born. The 789 ●
child was wearing a peculiar dress, made of sacking, and with a 854
hood in one piece with the frock (Fig. 34). The woman informed me, and I have been told the same thing by others, that this dress was put on the child to make it live. The dress must always be made out of a sack which has contained raw cotton; no other kind will do. Two such dresses were made and given to me (see Fig. 35).

On the seventh day after the birth a midwife comes and washes 854
the child, as stated above, and also the mother. The water used 852

of rings. On one of the baskets is placed a large winnowing sieve, 852
in which the child sleeps all night. When the midwife comes on the following morning, and both mother and child have been washed, some of the grains from one of the baskets are put in the sieve, the baby also being placed in it. The midwife then tosses and shakes the baby in the sieve, its mother meanwhile banging the edge of the metal basin with a tin mug. The striking of the basin by the mother is not, I believe, always done, but on one occasion when I was present at this ceremony the mother acted in this way. The tossing and shaking of the child in the sieve is repeated several times, after which the grains are returned to the basket. The midwife now takes the child in her arms, and covers it with a cloth of white cotton on which are placed some of the grains from one of the baskets. Having first carried the child into all the rooms on the ground floor, she then goes outside the house, sprinkling some of the grains wherever she walks, and repeating "*Ṣalla 'a 'n-Nebi*" (" Bless the Prophet ") over and over again during the whole of her perambulation.



[789] ●

FIG. 37. UMBILICAL CORD IN COTTON WRAPPING, AND OTHER CHARMS SUSPENDED FROM IT

Left to right: twisted iron wire, string of seven grains of beans, and bag containing samples of the seven ingredients of one of the baskets.

The child is now taken back into the mother's room, and the mid- 852
wife blackens its eyes with *koḥl*, a bottle of which she has brought 302
with her. She dips a feather into the *koḥl*, and, having opened 789
the child's eyes, passes the feather across each of them in turn. After thus painting the eyes she fastens round the child's neck the cotton case containing a piece of the umbilical cord, to which are

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852 302 ● 789 attached a string of seven grains of beans and a little cotton bag containing a small quantity of the seven ingredients of one of the baskets (Fig. 37).

[965] The midwife's fee consists of a large basket (Fig. 38) of maize, bread, dates, various nuts, and occasionally a little money.[1]

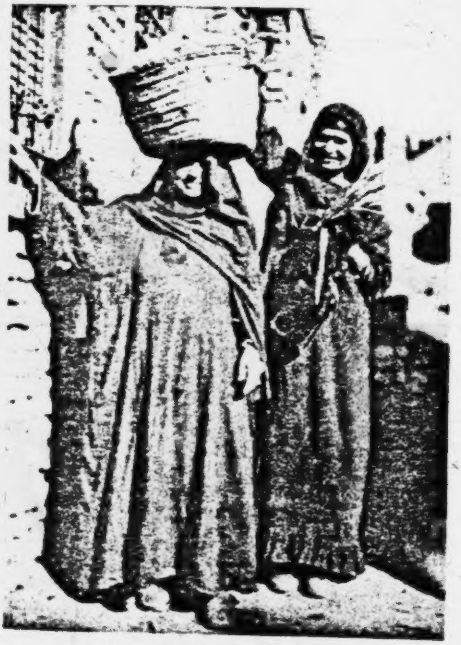

FIG. 38. MIDWIFE CARRYING HER WAGES ON HER HEAD

789 241 Some of the six various grains, together with the salt, are often given to the father to scatter over his fields. This is a fertility charm, and is believed to ensure
789 his having good crops.

In addition to the charms mentioned above, the child sometimes has
[463] another one made of
[291] thick iron wire twisted
[285] into a particular shape (Fig. 37). This is also hung round the child's neck, but only so if, when it cries, it clenches its hands and shakes itself.

In some parts of
789 852 Upper Egypt the following mixture is put into a child's eyes by the midwife on the seventh day. The woman brings an onion with her and squeezes the juice from it into a small coffee-cup, mixing with it salt, oil, and, usually, *koḥl* also. Then, taking a feather, she dips it into the mixture and, opening the child's eyes, brushes the
[856] feather right across them. It is believed that this will give the child wide open and beautiful eyes.

553 852 787 The naming of the child is part of the seventh-day ceremony. If the parents are anxious to discover the best and luckiest name for their offspring they proceed as follows. Candles, usually four

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[1] Sometimes she is, I believe, paid only in grain.

in number, sometimes of different colours, are procured, and a 553
different name is inscribed on each. All these candles are lighted 852
at once, and the name on the candle which burns the longest is 787
the one eventually bestowed on the child. After it has received a name the birth is entered in the Government archives, the name of the child's mother only being given ; the father's name is not entered at all.

Boys are more highly valued than girls, and special precautions 842
have to be taken when a male child is born to protect him from the 152
evil eye. Sometimes the midwife is bribed to keep the sex of the 754
child a secret, and if she is paid a sufficiently large sum of money she will consent to give out to the villagers that the child is a girl. I was told of a case of a woman who had given birth to a boy not knowing the sex of the child until it was thirty days old or more, and her husband was equally ignorant.

As a further protection from the evil eye a boy is often dressed 754
as a girl for two years or so, all the villagers, presumably, being 854
led to think that the child is a girl.

Women are supposed to suckle their children for two years, but 853
if a woman again conceives before the end of this period she must, 842
of course, wean her last-born child. When this happens she hangs 862
a 'date of jealousy' round the child's neck to prevent its being 789
jealous of the baby when it is born. I once witnessed a most frantic 152
display of jealousy on the part of a very young child when he saw his mother with the newly arrived infant in her arms. He flung himself upon her in a fury of envious rage. The 'dates of jealousy' in some parts of Egypt are acorns ; in other parts they are made of a kind of earth moulded into the form of a date stone.

If a child cries very much the mother will sometimes purchase 854
a very small copy of the Ḳorān and hang it round the child's neck. 789
It is believed that if the child begins to cry and then looks at the Ḳorān which it is wearing it will immediately stop weeping. Such small editions of this sacred book are also worn by a child to keep it well and to ensure its living. When used for this purpose the book is sewn up in a cotton case.

If, after long waiting, a woman at last bears a son a festival, 527
or *mūlid*, is held. There are various kinds of *mawālid* (plural 852
of *mūlid*) held for different reasons and on various occasions, and among them is that held in celebration of the birth of a son. It is a kind of thanksgiving on the part of the parents, and is also

527 852 believed to be beneficial to the child. I have been present at one or two such ceremonies, and the following description is typical of all.

A ram had been purchased for sacrifice, and the services of a butcher engaged for the slaughter of the animal. When I arrived at the house I was conducted on to the roof, where various members of the family were awaiting me. The ram was also there, in happy ignorance of its fate. Presently the butcher arrived, and [782] when he had ascertained that his knife was sufficiently sharp the poor animal was made to lie on the ground on its back. Then with a "*Bismillāh er-Raḥmān er-Raḥīm*" ("In the Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful") the butcher cut the ram's throat. I must confess that I did not see this part of the performance, for I closed my eyes and blocked up my ears, telling the people to let me know when it was all over. The carcass of [465] the animal was then hung up and skinned. The skin was, I believe, given to the butcher, in recognition of his services. A ● [789] good deal of the blood was preserved in a large bowl, and the house-door was sprinkled with it, a large dab of it being smeared on the centre.

852 761 The reason for the slaughtering of the ram at a *mūlid* for a child may be that a life is thus given for a life, and so this sacrifice of the animal will ensure the life of the child.

527 852 537 The child's mother and some of her female relatives now set to work to prepare the meat and cook it for the large number of guests who would assemble at the house in the evening, while I retired for a short rest. At about seven o'clock I returned to the house, where great preparations had been made, and where a con- [554] siderable number of visitors had already assembled. The seat of honour had been reserved for me, and soon after I arrived a sheikh celebrated for his excellent chanting of the Ḳorān entered with his assistants. I had brought a number of boxes of cigarettes with me, and some of these were now handed round by my servant, while coffee was brought for me. Newcomers constantly arrived, till every available seat had been taken, both on benches and on the floor, and then the sheikh began to recite. Such recitations are always intoned, and are repeated entirely from memory. The performer nearly always places a hand against one side of his face while he recites, and sways in rhythmic accompaniment to his chanting. This particular sheikh is renowned for his voice,

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F
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852 the horse, he is paraded through the village, accompanied by
304 musicians. If two brothers are to have this operation at the same time they ride together on one horse. When the perambulation
F of the village is over the boy is taken home, and all the friends who
C have placed money on his face, and also the barber, are provided
[533] with supper. Music plays an important part at this ceremony,
[534] and the musicians keep up a constant beating of drums, clashing of cymbals, and blowing of bagpipes. When the guests have finished supper they all, including the musicians, take their departure. On the following morning the barber only comes to the house and
F is first paid by the parents,
C who give him anything from
[292] one or two pounds upward. The child is then taken hold of and told not to be afraid. Some one tries to attract his attention, while the barber seizes this opportunity to cut off the foreskin. The boy wears a white *gallabīyeh* for this occasion, with long sleeves, in one of which the foreskin is tied up. The barber then ties the boy's mother and maternal aunt together by binding a turban round their throats, and drags them outside the door of the house.
F Friends, who by this time have collected outside, come into the
C house and present the barber with more money, and he then takes
[298] his departure. The wound is washed every day, and is anointed with some healing powder, which is, I fancy, *ḥenna*. The foreskin remains in the sleeve of the boy's *gallabīyeh* until the wound is
F healed, during which period the white gown must also be worn.

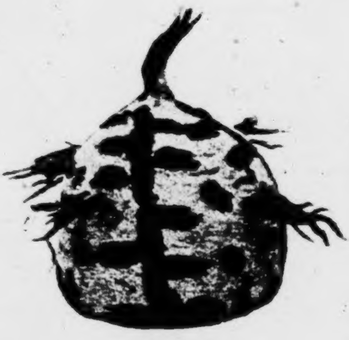

FIG. 40. CAP WORN BY A BOY AT HIS CIRCUMCISION CEREMONY

● 789 A charm consisting of short lengths of the mid-rib of a palm-
852 branch, deeply notched along one side, is worn by boys after they have been circumcised to keep the wound from going septic, and to ward off the evil eye. Such a charm is worn for seven days
F after the operation, being suspended from the neck by a string.

852 No reason could be given as to why the mother and maternal aunt were tied together by the throat and thrust out of the house.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

584 I HAVE already stated that girls at a very early age dress themselves up in order to attract attention to themselves and so secure a husband. These children are often married to quite [582] elderly men, old enough to be their fathers or even their grandfathers. Such disparity in age is most unsuitable, and frequently leads to great unhappiness. In their attempts to obtain husbands the girls are aided and abetted by their mothers, who resort to magic and trickery of all sorts to secure a desirable man. The two following incidents, which occurred while I was in Egypt in 1926, illustrate a device often employed by women who want to catch a man, either for themselves or for one of their daughters.

832 A certain woman living in a village in Middle Egypt was walking out one day when her glance fell on a young man (Fig. 41) to whom she took a great fancy, and who, she thought, would make an excellent husband for her daughter. She therefore went to a magi- ● [789] cian and begged him to write a charm, which she buried under the threshold of her house. She then persuaded one of her male relatives to bring the young man to her house on the pretext that he desired his company when he went thither on some business matter. The young man acceded to this request, and the elder man, who knew the exact spot where the charm was buried, stood at the door of the woman's house in such a position that his companion, when he entered, must step over the buried charm. The girl made some coffee for the two visitors, and either brought it in herself or allowed the young man to get a glimpse of her in some other way. The youth then went home, and on the way there began to think of the girl whom he had seen, and to desire her as his wife. By the time he reached home he wanted her still more, and by the evening was quite mad about her, refusing to eat or sleep, and saying that he must have the girl as his wife. I saw him several times after this, and he was in a most forlorn and love-sick condition, imploring me to intercede with his father, who was not

E 585 and that the procession is accompanied by men carrying lanterns and candles. As they proceed the women utter their *zagharīṭ*. The priest addresses the pair, but before he does so he takes a silken thread and passes it over the right shoulder of the bridegroom and under his left arm, where he ties the thread into a knot with a loop. After the address from the priest is over the bridegroom pays him a sum of money, and then the priest undoes the knotted thread. He then takes the two engagement rings which the bride and bridegroom gave each other at their betrothal and ties them together with a silken thread. After putting certain questions to the pair he returns them their rings, and each puts his or her ring on; the bridegroom does not place the ring on the bride's finger.

E 585 537 After the service is over the priest invites anyone present who may wish to do so to speak. Perhaps one man may get up and deliver an oration, in which, in addition to various other complimentary remarks, he will probably compare the bride to the moon, and the bridegroom to the sun. Others will follow his example, and even women are permitted to speak on such occasions. The bridegroom then either himself thanks his friends for their kindly speeches or asks his father or his brother to do this for him.

E 585 292 Both bride and bridegroom wear new clothes on the occasion of their marriage, and they wear these garments for seven days after the wedding. When this period has elapsed these clothes are put away for several days, and then they can be worn at any time.

E 585 789 When the bride is on her way to the bridegroom's house her unmarried female friends who accompany her thither pinch her on one of her thighs. By doing this they believe that they also will soon get a husband. The bridegroom is pinched in the same way by his unmarried male friends, who hope that this will ensure each of them a bride. I am told that this is a common custom among the *fellāḥīn*.

On the morning after the marriage night the bridegroom when he goes out pulls a branch off a palm-tree, tears off all the leaves, and then cuts off a long length of the thicker end of the mid-rib as a stick. He then splits up one end of it several times, so that these split ends stand out slightly. With this split stick he strikes any of his unmarried male friends whom he happens to meet. Those whom he thus strikes will, it is believed, shortly marry too. This, according to my informant, is a very old custom which was formerly

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common to all classes in Egypt, but now survives only among the *fellāḥīn*. F 585 789 ●

Among the Copts divorce is never permitted, but among the Muslims it is not a difficult matter to arrange, though it is necessary for a man or woman to produce some valid reason for taking this course of action. The parties, or perhaps the husband or the wife only, go before the *ḳāḍi* and say that they wish to be divorced. A sum of money is sometimes paid to the other party by the one who applies for the divorce. A man is permitted to divorce his wife if she is childless; that is to say, if he wishes to get rid of her. If after such a separation the parties wish to marry again they can do so. The 'triple divorce' is a much more serious affair, as will be seen in the following story. F 586 F [892] F [291] [192]

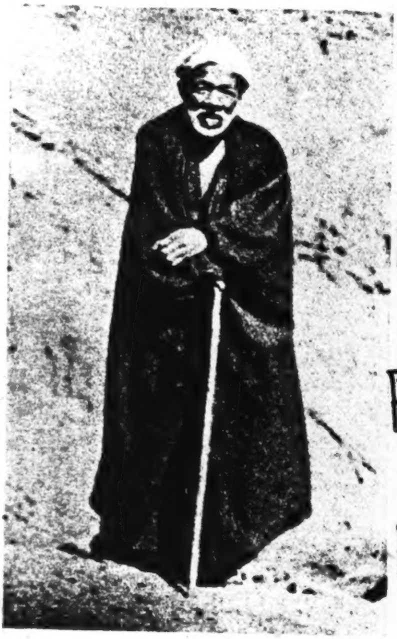

FIG. 42. THE OLD MAN WHO DIVORCED HIS WIFE

An old man whom I have known for several years (Fig. 42) came to me in great distress when I arrived in his village. He is eighty years of age or more, and owns most, if not all, the looms in the place. I thought he seemed very bent, and he hobbled along with the aid of a stick, followed by a grinning crowd of villagers. He fell down at my feet and began to kiss my boots, and appeared to be beside himself with grief. It appeared that shortly before my arrival he had got into a temper with his wife (Fig. 43), who is considerably younger than he is, and in a fit of rage had divorced her by the triple divorce. This divorce is obtained by a man saying to his wife " I divorce you " three times over, in the presence of witnesses. Once this is done he cannot remarry his wife, however much he may wish to do so, unless she first marries another man, F 887 586

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CHAPTER VI

FERTILITY RITES

RITES to ensure the birth of children are practically worldwide, and are of great variety. The failure to produce offspring involved the weakening of the tribe, which in early times depended upon its numerical strength for its defence against hostile neighbours. Hence the importance of the possession of children, especially of the male sex. 842

Love for their children is a marked trait in the character of the modern Egyptians. I have often seen the roughest *fellāḥ* handle his sick child with remarkable tenderness when he has brought it to me in the hope that I might be able to cure it of some complaint. 855

Muslim law permits a man to put away his wife if she has no children, and a woman divorced for this cause has small chance of obtaining another husband when once the reason for her divorce has become known. Hence the prospect of childlessness is a very real terror to a wife, and the methods to which women resort in order to prevent such a catastrophe are numerous. 586 842 152

Some years ago, when I was working at a large collection of charms and various magical appliances at the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford, it occurred to me that certain so-called pendants which my brother had brought me from Egypt might have some magical powers attached to them. These pendants are modern copies of ancient Egyptian blue glazed amulets, representing gods, goddesses, sacred animals, or scarabs. I showed these objects to an Egyptian sheikh then resident in Oxford, and asked him what they were used for. After some hesitation he told me that they were women's charms, and were used in Upper Egypt as a means of ensuring the birth of children. I have found that such charms are in great request in all the provinces south of Cairo that I have visited. The sheikh also told me that a man travelling about Upper Egypt with such charms in his possession would be besieged, as he approached a village, by crowds of women begging to be allowed to step over these amulets. 789 842

THE FELLAḤIN OF UPPER EGYPT

789 842 On my first visit to Egypt in 1920, soon after my arrival at my brother's camp on the high-desert slope in Asyūṭ Province, a certain number of childless women sent appealing messages to me, asking if I would let them have one of the bones which were scattered in great numbers about the ancient burial site on which the camp was situated. Their object was to step or jump over the bone in order to ensure, as they believed, the production of offspring. I acceded to their request, and then suddenly thought of my pendants, which I had unfortunately forgotten to bring out to Egypt with me. However, I sent a message to the women to say that I had written to England requesting that certain very potent charms that I possessed should be sent to me as soon as possible.

When the parcel arrived I caused the fact to be known in the various villages of the district, at the same time intimating that I should be glad to see any of the women who wished to make use of them. From then onward women, sometimes as many as ten at a time, would come from various villages in the district, crossing the lower desert, and climbing up to our camp on the hills which rose into the upper desert. They were usually accompanied by a middle-aged man or woman, sometimes by both. The man was not present at the ceremony, but the woman chaperon stayed with them all the time.

[532]

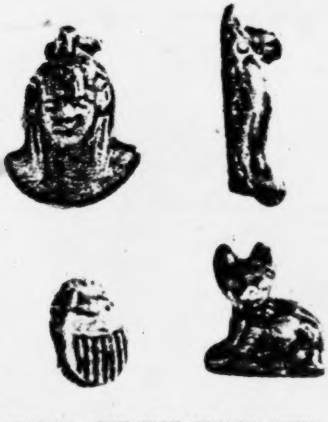

FIG. 44. THE FOUR CHARMS OVER WHICH THE WOMEN STEP

The ritual was as follows. The women first repaired to one of the ancient decorated tomb-chapels, conducted thither by one of our servants, who had the key. On entering they each stepped seven times backward and forward over what they supposed to be the mouth of the shaft admitting to the subterranean burial chamber. When this performance was over they returned to the undecorated tomb-chapel in which I lived. Here I produced the charms, two of which were placed on the ground at a time. Then each woman

solemnly stepped over them backward and forward seven times. 789
Four charms in all were used, representing the head of Isis, a 842
mummified divinity, a scarab, and a cat (Fig. 44). When this was accomplished the lower jaw-bone of an ancient Egyptian skull was placed on the ground. The same ceremony was yet again performed, being repeated with two complete ancient Egyptian heads, one a well-preserved mummified head, the other a skull. A glass of water was then brought, into which the blue glazed charms were dropped. Each woman drank some of the water, and then picked out the charms and sucked them, and some rubbed their bodies with these magical objects, and also applied the water to their persons.

It may interest my readers to know that on my return to Egypt the following year one of the first items of news communicated to me by my servant was that at least two of the women who had had resort to my charms would shortly bear children.

Great efficacy is attached to the Pyramids, and childless women 842
will repair to one of them and walk round it seven times, believing 778
that this perambulation will assist them to become mothers. Women 789
sometimes beg to be allowed to remove small portions of the decorated walls in ancient tomb-chapels to assure their bearing children. It appears that ancient things in Egypt are credited with great potency in this respect, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain any reliable information from the people themselves as to why they attach such magical power to antiquities. The stepping over the tomb-shaft suggests a belief in reincarnation, and this [775]
belief does exist among the peasants, as will be seen later on; but there is also the idea that ***barakeh*** is attached to anything that is old, or sacred, or even peculiar. The word ***barakeh*** means blessing, and ***barūkeh*** is a lucky coin, a thing to bring good luck.

Women who have no children will sometimes visit a sheikh's 842
tomb, entreating him to intervene on their behalf, and vowing to 782
make some gift in return if their wish is granted. A cord or cords are often to be seen hanging across the inside of such a building, and from it are suspended a variety of objects, including coloured handkerchiefs. These are, in many cases, the votive offerings of women, which they have hung up in the tomb when their prayers for offspring have been answered.

Lane[1] records the practice of visiting tombs or mosques to obtain 782

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[1] *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London, 1871), vol. i, pp. 300 f.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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C 842 789 C [827] been sitting and proceeded to lift the jar from off the woman's stomach. It took a very strong and somewhat lengthy pull to do this, and as it was finally removed there was a resounding pop, like an explosion. It was explained to me that one possible reason for the woman not having conceived was that she had "wind in her stomach." The noise caused by the removal of the jar was this wind coming away, as they supposed, from the stomach through the navel. The performance was repeated two or three times, and on each occasion when the jar was pulled away the noise was very loud, and the two attendant women remarked on how much wind the patient had in her stomach. As I have said, the woman who removed the jar had to exercise her full strength to get it away, and this part of the performance must have caused the patient a good deal of discomfort, if not actual pain, for her stomach was dragged up with the jar in the effort to remove it, the suction, of course, being caused by the vacuum created by placing the jar over the lighted 'candle.' I was sorry to hear, when making inquiries later on, that the operation had failed to produce the desired effect !

F [291]

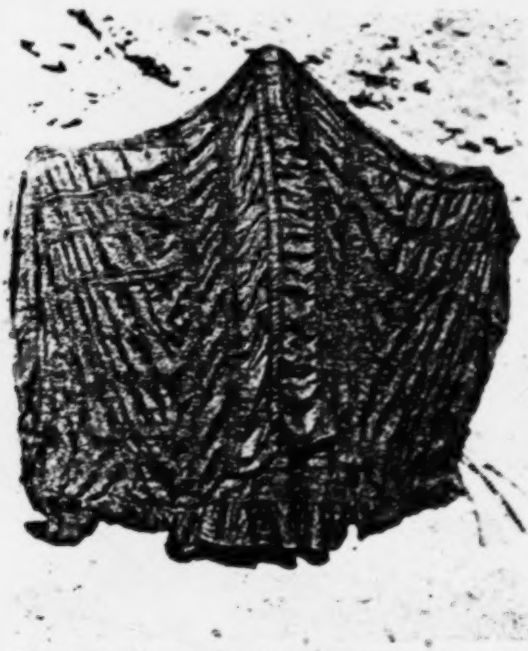

FIG. 47. WOMAN WITH OUTSTRETCHED ARMS COMPLETELY ENVELOPED IN A TŌB

F 842 •789 Childless women frequently have recourse to this fertility rite, at any rate in some parts of Egypt. I do not yet know if it is a widely

spread custom, for, being a somewhat private operation, it would 842
not be talked about freely, and one must have been on very familiar 189
terms with the people for a long time before being invited to be
present on such an occasion.

Quite recently I was present at another rite performed by two 842
childless women. 189
A third woman 291
held a long, wide piece of black material over her head and outstretched arms, so that she was completely covered (Fig. 47). This garment is called a *tōb*, and is the one worn by women out of doors. The woman who thus officiates must be one who has had children that have died. One of the childless women then crept underneath the *tōb* and walked round the officiant seven times, always keeping well under the garment (Fig. 48). The second woman then followed suit. No woman who has walked round another woman in this way must in her turn thus hold the *tōb* for another, for if she did the benefit she had hoped to secure by walking under this garment would be taken from her.

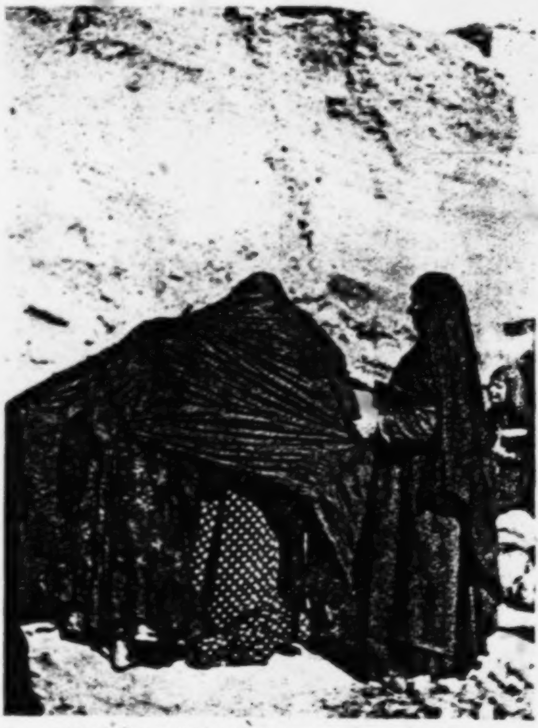

FIG. 48. WOMEN CREEPING UNDER THE TŌB

These two women, hearing that I was coming to the village in 842
which the ceremony was to take place, delayed carrying it out until 189
I could be present, in the hope of getting the additional benefit of 123

842 789 123 my *barakeh*. I am happy to say that in both cases the performance was crowned with success!

778 842 I have already mentioned that the peasants appear to believe that ancient things are specially endowed with *barakeh*, and that on that account they may be efficacious in curing childless women of their barrenness. On the site of an ancient temple in Middle Egypt is a pool of water in which large inscribed stones are partly submerged, while others lie on the ground close by. The site is called *el-Kenīseh* (the Church) by the peasants, probably because it became known that it is the site of an ancient temple. This pool is believed to possess miraculous powers, and every Friday childless women flock thither from all the surrounding villages. They clamber over the stones on the edge of the pool and also over those which are partly submerged, performing this somewhat arduous feat three times, and going more or less in a circular direction (Fig. 49). After this they hope to conceive.

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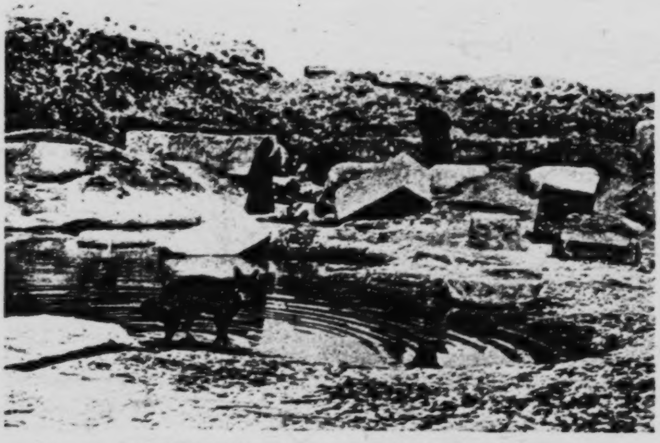

FIG. 49. WOMEN PERAMBULATING THE POOL ON THE SITE OF AN ANCIENT TEMPLE

Curiously enough, women come to this spot and act in the same manner to prevent conception. On the occasion of my visit to the pool one of the women who was there told me that she had come for this latter purpose. She did not want to have another child for some time, as she had one or two very young children living

FERTILITY RITES

Women also come here if they are experiencing difficulty in suckling their children, and donkeys which are not producing sufficient milk for their young are likewise driven here. The ceremony is the same as that for childlessness, and after its performance the milk is supposed to be much increased in quantity.

778 789 [231] 853 ●

Many years ago my brother, Dr A. M. Blackman, recorded a custom of hanging skins of foxes over the doors of houses in Lower Nubia.[1] On inquiry he found that they were believed to be charms "to protect the women of the household, preventing miscarriages, and helping them in labour." In some parts of Egypt if a mother wants another child she will attach a small piece of fox's skin to the head of her last-born living child. After doing this she hopes that her wish will be granted.

[171] 789 [825] 842

The pollen of a male palm is used as a charm to produce fertility; some of it is mixed in water, which is drunk by the woman who wishes to have a child. The fertilization of the female palm with such pollen might naturally account for the belief in its efficacy as a charm to cure a woman of barrenness.

[824]

It is believed that if a woman who has lately had a child goes to see another woman who has recently given birth to a child which did not survive, the latter will not conceive again. The happy mother whose child lives must wait until her friend's child has been dead for fifteen days, when all danger of seeing her will be over. However, should such an unfortunate visit be paid before the fifteen days have expired, the bereaved mother must counteract the danger of future childlessness by visiting the tomb of her dead child and going through the ceremony of stepping over its body already described. She may as an alternative choose one of the other rites for the same purpose.

574 842 [789]

I will now describe some of the methods employed to prevent conception. One I have mentioned already in connexion with the stones in and beside the pool. If an expectant mother wishes to have no more children for a certain period she will take the seeds of a castor-oil plant and, on the day after her child is born, she will eat one of the seeds if she wishes to be without another child for one year, two if for two years, and so on. This is believed to be invariably effective. If a woman has a spite against another who wishes to have a child she may secretly insert some castor-oil seeds into her food, and so render her unable to conceive.

842 278 [754]

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[1] *Man*, vol. ix (1909), pp. 9 f.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

THE FELLAḤIN OF UPPER EGYPT

842 789 [841] If a woman when she gives birth to a child does not want to conceive again for some time she takes some date stones and covers them with some of the blood of her confinement, and then, tying them up in a rag, conceals them in a wall of her house between the bricks. The chink is then stopped up with clay. Each date stone she thus conceals represents a year, and the number, of course, varies according to the number of years she wishes to remain without offspring. When she wishes to have a child again she removes the date stones from their hiding-place, steps over them seven times, and then, placing them in water, bathes in it. I had the opportunity of witnessing such a performance once. The woman, to enable me to take a photograph in a better light, placed the date stones on the threshold of her house, and then stepped over them. Some of these date stones, with the rag in which they had been tied up, were afterward given to me.

842 754 789 [791] A man who is well known to me divorced one of his two wives a year or so ago, and this woman resolved to have her revenge on the other wife. She accomplished her purpose in the following manner. She consulted a female magician, who wrote a spell on an egg and another on a palm-leaf. A male member of the divorced woman's family (probably her brother) took the egg and the leaf and hid them in a tomb. The hiding-place is kept secret, so that no one can remove them, for if they were discovered and taken away they would no longer remain effective. It has come to the knowledge of the man's wife that the divorced woman has acted in this way, and the spells, so she says, have made it impossible for her to bear a child. Possibly the firm belief she has in the potency
[158] of such spells has brought her into a neuropathic condition.

842 164 163 515 The fact that so many methods of curing barrenness are employed by the peasants is an indication that, despite the high birth-rate, infertility in women is not uncommon in Egypt. As has been pointed out to me by a doctor who is in daily touch with the poor, venereal disease, which is, unfortunately, very prevalent in some villages, is largely responsible for this state of affairs. A proper organization, involving treatment and instruction in simple hygiene—at present, so far as I know, entirely lacking in the country places—is badly needed to prevent the further spread of this terrible scourge.

AGRICULTURE AND HARVEST RITES

If the land to be irrigated is much above water-level two or three 241
of these *shawādīf* (plural of *shādūf*) are worked one above the other. 312

The men thus engaged usually sing at their task, some of their
songs being very melancholy, and descriptive of their hard and [533]
laborious toil. One of them runs thus : [152]

> *Shawādīf*, [283]
> Their ropes are of palm-fibre [415]
> And their pails are of goatskins.
> And it was in ancient times that *shawādīf* were
> invented
> By the blessed Ṣāliḥ Zabādi.

The ropes referred to are those by which the bucket is suspended from the end of the weighted branch which acts as a lever. The name of the supposed inventor is, of course, mythological.

The following is a lament on the hard labour involved in the working of a *shādūf* :

> Hast Thou resolved upon strangling me, O God ? [533]
> Loosen the noose !
> No mother weeps [for me],
> No aunt,
> No sister ! [1]

Another method of raising the water is by means of a water- 241
wheel round the circumference of which pottery jars are attached. 312
Another small wheel with cogs is attached to the same axis as the 231
larger wheel, and into it fit the cogs of a large horizontal wheel. When this is made to revolve the two vertical wheels are set in motion. A long pole is attached to the horizontal wheel, and to it an ox, cow, or buffalo, or even a camel, is yoked and driven round and round by a man or boy. The animal is usually blindfolded to prevent it from becoming giddy. The groaning and creaking of the turning water-wheel form, to my mind, a most soothing sound.[2] Yet another contrivance for raising the water to the level of the fields is the Archimedean screw, depicted in Fig. 98.

During harvest-time every available man, woman, and child is 243
employed in the fields ; but before any of the corn is cut some of 789 ●
the villagers go into the fields and pluck the finest ears by hand. 778
These are plaited into a special form, and this object, called the

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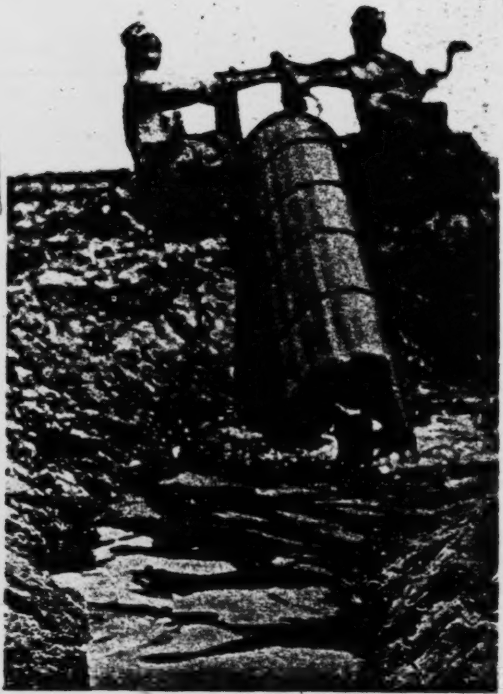
[1] See H. Schaefer, *The Songs of an Egyptian Peasant*, translated by F. H. Breasted (Leipzig, 1904), pp. 43 f.

[2] For excellent photographs of a *shādūf* and a water-wheel see *op. cit.*, pp. 45 and 107.

243 789 778 'bride of the corn' (*ʿarûset el-ḳamḥ*), is used as a charm. One may be suspended over the house-door as an antidote to the evil eye; another may be hung up in the room containing the stores of food, as a charm to ensure abundance. Many tradesmen hang such objects in their shop-windows, believing that this will bring them plenty of customers. Again, in some parts of Egypt the 'bride of the corn' is temporarily placed on the heaps of grain after the winnowing is completed, as a charm to secure a good harvest the following year. Sometimes the grain from these heads of corn is extracted and mixed with the next year's sowing. The 'bride' may be left hanging till it is replaced at the next harvest, or, again, it may be allowed to remain in its place until it falls to pieces (Fig. 99).

[241] [312]



243 431

FIG. 98. THE ARCHIMEDEAN SCREW

Before the field is cut a certain number of people are given presents of corn by the owner. These gifts of the firstfruits are bestowed on some of the poorest people in the village, as well as on the barber, the *mueddin* (the man who chants the call to prayer from the mosque), the *zummâreh*-player, the carpenter, and the *fuḳahâ*—the last-mentioned being poor men who recite the Ḳorân in mosques, in private houses, at funeral ceremonies, and at the periodical visits to the grave (see pp. 112, 114 f., 117 ff., and Fig. 100). [463] [793] [794]

AGRICULTURE AND HARVEST RITES

In some parts of Upper Egypt the following customs are observed 243 in connexion with the cultivation of *dura* (maize) only. A *dura*-field is irrigated by means of a water-wheel or a *shādūf* ten times, and when the water has been conveyed to the fields for the last time the owner, or one of his family, brings to the field *faṭīr* (a 262 kind of sweet pastry), or *kunāfeh* (fine macaroni), or *rashteh* 264 (macaroni cooked in milk). He then stands on one of the pillars of the water-wheel or *shādūf* and cries to his neighbours in the field, "Come and eat," firing his gun at the same time. Such firing takes place regularly at weddings, or on any joyous occasion. After the food has been eaten the owner [412] of the field plucks some of the heads of [202] the *dura*-plants and places them on one of the empty food plates. This he presents to whichever member of his family brought the food. He then returns to the field and plucks four heads of *dura*, which are fastened on the foreheads of the two oxen or buffaloes which worked the water-wheel. The animals are then driven home, and all who see them will know by the heads of *dura* decorating their foreheads that the irrigation of their owner's field of *dura* is finished.

When a *shādūf* is used for raising the 243 water the owner plucks a head of *dura* for each *shādūf* that has been used for irrigating his field. The *dura* is attached to the arms (or levers) of the *shawādīf* which, like the cattle, are brought home thus decorated with the maize.

FIG. 101. A SICKLE

The last time of irrigating a field of *dura* is called *el-fiṭāmeh*, which means the act of weaning. The same name is given to the [853] last occasion on which a mother suckles her child.

In many of the provinces of Upper Egypt, when the *dura* or wheat or barley has been threshed the heaps of grain are left standing [431] on the threshing-floor all night. But before sunset, when the [264] work is completed, the owner of the grain brings some food to the [789]

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789

threshing-floor, either *faṭīr*, *kunāfeh*, or *rashteh*, or cooked meat. He stands up on one of the heaps of grain and calls out to his

[231]
[492]

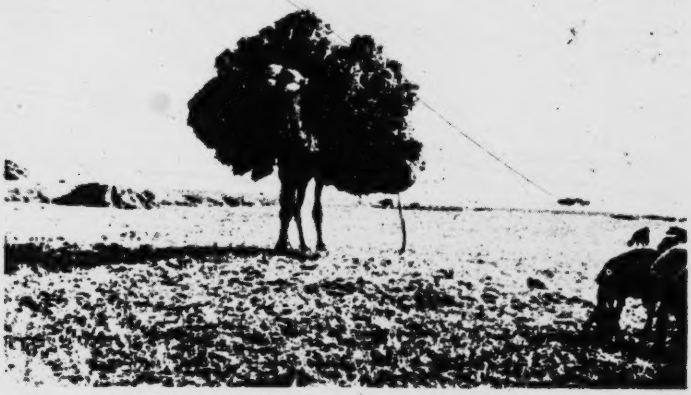

FIG. 192. CARRYING CORN TO THE THRESHING-FLOOR

friends, " Come and eat," and he fires off his gun as a sign of joy. When his friends have eaten he places some of the food that is over

[907]
[291]

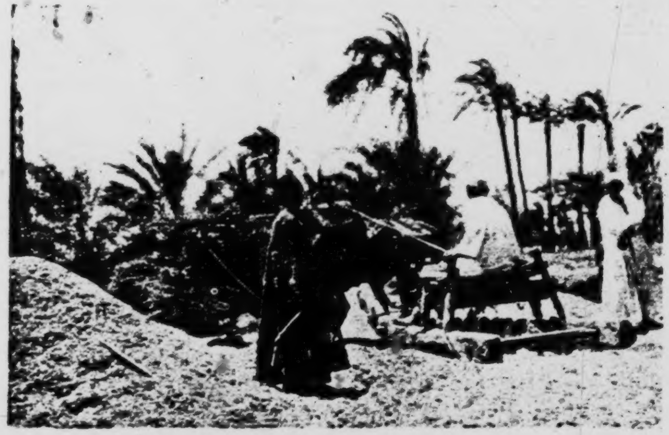

FIG. 103. THRESHING WITH THE NŌRAG

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around and in the heaps of grain. This, it is believed, will bring a blessing and a plentiful supply of the grain; also, so the peasants

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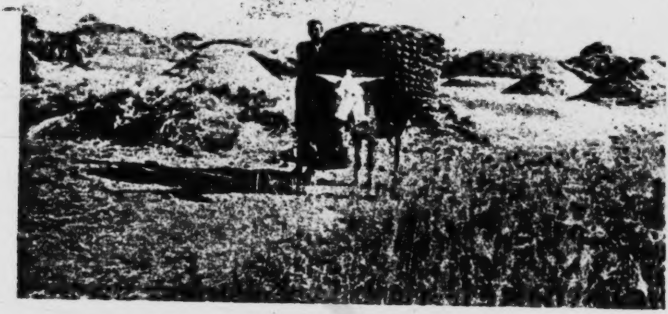

FIG. 104. CARRYING AWAY THE STRAW

[492]
[231]
[243]

believe, it will satisfy the ʿ*afārīt*, who will eat some of the food thus placed for them. If the owner neglected to do this the ʿ*afārīt* would take some of the grain.

This custom, as well as that mentioned before, of placing bread among the heaps of winnowed grain suggests a belief, at some period, in a corn-goddess, to whom offerings had to be made. So far as I have yet discovered there is no trace of such a belief left in the minds of the peasants, but these ceremonies certainly suggest the possibility of an earlier belief in some fertility or earth-goddess, and the name given to the last time of irrigating a field (i.e., *el-fiṭāmeh*) bears out this idea.

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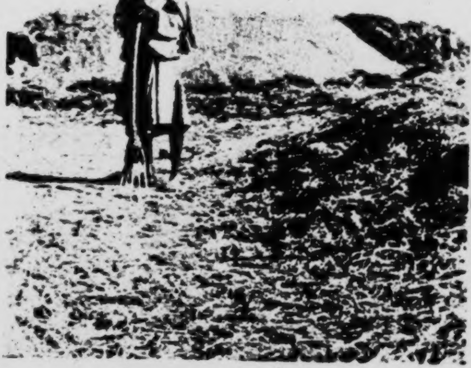

FIG. 105. HARVESTING-FORK

[412]
[291]
[243]

M

[Text continues on p. 180]

THE FELLAHIN OF UPPER EGYPT

E 791 787 789
When a magician is called in to find hidden treasure he goes at night to the ground where the treasure is said to be hidden, and he sweeps the whole plot to get rid of impurities, afterward sprinkling it with water. When this is done he lights a fire in which he burns some of the feathers of a hoopoo. The whole ceremony is repeated two or three nights in succession. On the third night the magician
E [779]
cuts a cross with a knife the whole length and breadth of the selected site. On the knife are inscribed the letters of the King of *alif*, these letters representing the servants of the King. (I should explain here that each letter of the alphabet, of which *alif* is the first, is said to have a king attached to it.)
F C [832]
The magician now brings branches from four different trees—*i.e.*, olive, pomegranate, apricot, and tamarisk (*ṭarfā*). These four branches are stuck into each outer point of the cross, and are brought together at the upper ends like a tent. Then he takes a branch from a young palm-tree that has not yet borne any fruit. The length of this palm-branch must measure from the magician's elbow to the tips of his fingers, plus the length of his hand. The upper ends of the four branches mentioned above having been tied together, the branch from the palm-tree is tied horizontally across them, its leaves being stripped off, leaving only the mid-rib. On either side of this mid-rib the magician writes the letters belonging to the
E [776]
two kings of fire, water, air, and dust—for each of these has two kings, one an *'afrīt*, the other a heavenly being. Then he will watch the branch to see in which direction it will bend. If it bends toward the right he will shift all the four branches which are stuck in the ground in that direction—*i.e.*, toward the right—and again watch the horizontal mid-rib. He will repeat this process until he gets to a spot where the mid-rib of the palm-branch remains absolutely horizontal and motionless, when he knows he has arrived at the exact spot under which the treasure lies concealed.

FIG. 115. CHARMS WORN BY A WOMAN TO KEEP HER HUSBAND'S LOVE

COPTS MR10

MAGICIANS AND MAGIC E

The following is another method of finding hidden treasure. 791
In this case a priest acted as magician, and the exact spot where 787
the treasure lay hidden was known. 789 ●

On the outskirts of a certain village in Upper Egypt there is a E
very large stone. It lies on the ground and is covered with water 778
for a great part of the year—probably water left from the inundation. 776
Under this stone treasure of great value is believed to be buried
The stone is said to extend some distance underground, its base
being some yards below the surface. A cock is supposed to be
the guardian of this treasure, and it sometimes appears to certain E
of the villagers, crows two or three times, and then disappears.

A Coptic priest in the neighbourhood owns a book in which is 793
entered a list of all the buried treasures in that province, where
such hidden hoards are believed to be numerous. Among others 773
in this book was noted the description and locality of the hidden 789
treasure in question, and he determined to see if he could get it. Accordingly, at midnight he went to the stone, taking his book with him, for in it were written the proper incantations to be recited on such an occasion. He also took incense with him, which he burned in a dish, meanwhile reciting the incantations prescribed in his book. Suddenly the great stone broke in two, the two halves banging together and making a sound like the roar of a lion. This terrific noise disturbed all the inhabitants of the village near by, who came out to see what was the matter. The priest was so afraid of being discovered that he climbed up a tall palm-tree not far from the spot and remained there till dawn, when he ventured to climb down and return to his house.

I was told that, as soon as the priest ceased burning the incense and reciting the incantations, both acts having come to an abrupt conclusion when he fled in terror to the tree, the two halves of the
stone joined together again, and not the slightest trace of a crack E
is now visible.

The people say that it would be useless for anyone to attempt 773
to dig up the treasure, for the deeper you dig the lower the stone goes into the earth.

There is a large number of stories current all over the country about hidden treasure, and I have been told of the existence of more than one book containing a list of places where treasure is to be found.

It is the custom of many of the countryfolk to hide their money 000

Him, the Highest. Take charge, Angel Gabrāīl, of the illness 754 [presumably in the sense of 'make it your charge to make him 788 ill'] of so and so, the son of so and so [mentioning the mother's 776 name]. Quickly, now!" The egg is then hidden in a tomb.

I am informed that this is a very interesting charm: black typifying 754 evil, blood attracting spirits, and a tomb being the haunt 776 of ghoulish spirits.[1]

It may be mentioned here that in all these charms, spells, and incantations it is necessary to write the name of the *mother* of the person whom it concerns. If the father's name is inserted instead the charm is abortive.

The events related in the following story are, so my informant strongly maintains, perfectly true.

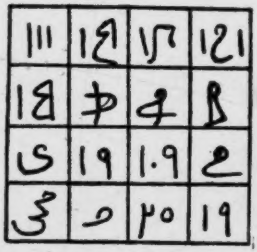

FIG. 116. A MAGIC SQUARE

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In a small village in Upper Egypt there lived a man and his wife, the latter being very good-looking. One day a certain *ḳāḍi*[2] who was visiting the village in question saw her, and, falling in love with her on the spot, desired her as his wife. Knowing that she was already married, his only plan was to get rid of her husband, and so he determined to drive the unfortunate man mad. To accomplish this he induced a magician to write a charm on a piece of paper, which he tied to an inner branch high up on a palm-tree, where it could not easily be seen. The reason for his thus tying the charm to a palm-branch is the idea that, as the branches of the tree are blown this way and that in the wind in apparent confusion, so the brain of the man against whom the spell was concocted would be tortured and confused. Possibly the woman's husband got to know what had been done, but anyhow the poor man lost his reason. He tore off his clothes, tied a rope round his waist, and spoke at times in an unknown tongue.

"You must say," so he told the village boys who congregated around him, "'*Kee ree bra ra kee ree bru.*'"

He would also constantly mutter, "Kamaleh [his wife's name] went to the east, Kamaleh went to the east," repeating it over and

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[1] I am indebted to Mr E. S. Thomas for this information.

[2] The word means 'judge,' as has been already explained, but it is also, as in this instance, a title given to a man who draws up marriage contracts, hears divorce cases in villages, and so on.

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[586]
F
754
158

over again. Finding that he got no better, his wife divorced him, whereupon the *kāḍi* asked for her in marriage, and was accepted. Meanwhile, the poor husband wandered aimlessly about, saying that he was king of his native village. He collected *būṣ*—dry *dura* (maize) stalks—each stalk of which he thought was a gun. With these he armed himself and the young lads of the village, and told them that he was their king, and that they must follow him to fight against the other villages. On the day of the weekly market he would repair to the market-place, seize large pieces of meat hung up for sale, and eat them raw. He would also pounce upon the fish which the fishermen had caught in the pond adjoining the village. At last the *ʿomdeh*, or headman, of the village, finding that the poor fellow had become a disturbing element in the place, wrote to headquarters about him, and he was removed to an asylum. Here he died, but up to the last the one sensible word he was constantly uttering was his wife's name. The events recorded still form a common topic of conversation in the madman's native village.

F
[189]

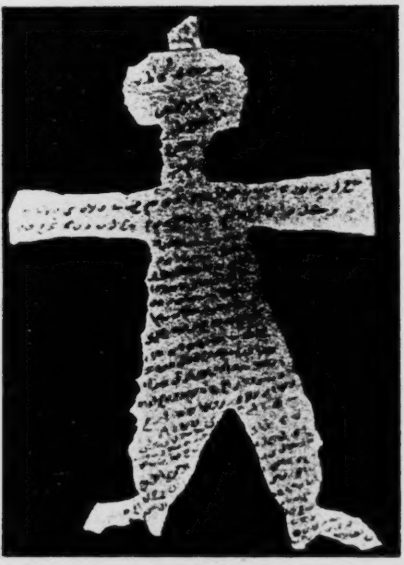

FIG. 117. CHARM TO DRAW A MAN OR WOMAN FROM A DISTANCE

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I myself have seen the *kāḍi* who played such a prominent and cruel part in this bit of village history, and the poor madman's wife whom he married figures in the following account of how a woman can be drawn from a distance.

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To bring a man or woman from a distance the magician proceeds as follows. He takes four branches of a pomegranate-tree and sticks them into the ground, tying them together at the top. He then makes a paper figure of a man or woman, and writes a charm on it (Fig. 117). The figure shown in the accompanying photograph was made and inscribed for me by the Coptic magician

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13 ●
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

E
already mentioned. Though in theory the figure is supposed to differ for the two sexes, in practice this rule does not always hold, for the figure in my possession is said to represent both sexes equally well. Having completed the writing on the paper figure, he hangs it from the centre of the branches by a red silken cord, places burning incense below it, and begins to recite the incantation supposed to be written on the figure. 754 789 ●

E
I should explain here that there are said to be seven kings beneath the earth, three of whom are more famous than the others. These three are called Ṭarish, Ḳasūra, and Zoba, the last having four heads. Their names are written on the figure. The other four kings are called Mīyemūn, Bāraḳān, el-Aḥmar (the red one), el-Abyāḍ (the white one). 776

E
The translation of the charm runs thus: "O King Ṭarish, O King Ḳasūra, O King Zoba who hast the four heads! Go on, three great kings of the underworld, and give your orders to your servants to bring so and so, the son or daughter of so and so [mentioning the mother's name]. If he [or she] is sitting make him [or her] stand up, and snatch him [or her] up, and mount him [or her] on a horse, and fly with him [or her] through the air, till you arrive at my house."[1] 789

E
A man of my acquaintance who knew this Coptic magician well was at one time very sceptical of his professed powers, and was inclined to think that he simply deceived the people with rather clever chicanery. The magician was well aware of this, and, on meeting him in the village one day, spoke to him and told him that he knew he had no faith in his magic. He then offered to demonstrate his powers, if the man would come with him then and there to his house. This he consented to do, and the magician conducted him into his private room, where he proceeded to act in the manner described above. He first called up an *ʿafrīt*, whom he ordered to bring before him the woman who had married the *ḳāḍi*. The *ʿafrīt* was, I suppose, either one of these kings or one of their messengers. My acquaintance declares that he saw the *ʿafrīt* quite plainly. After a minute or two the woman whom the magician had summoned appeared before them, and the man told me that he noticed that her dress was covered with flour. Presently the 754 791 787

E
[776]

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[1] The actual writing on this figure is a jumble of letters. The translation given is what the magician told me should be written on it. No doubt constant careless copying has led to this meaningless inscription.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

754 magician dismissed her and she vanished. The woman had been
791 brought from a village about three miles off, and, on inquiry, my
787 acquaintance found that, at the time when she had been brought
before them, she was making bread in her house, when her dress
would, of course, be covered with flour! After this remarkable
F exhibition my acquaintance told me that he felt that the magician
E really had some extraordinary powers.

754 The object of one of the spells possessed by my magician friend
789 is "to make a king or any governor merciful to his subjects, and
782 to ensure his granting any request made to him." To make such
776 a spell effective the following procedure is adopted. At sunrise the
magician makes a fire of wood, or, perhaps, charcoal, or cow-dung,[1]
but not of *būṣ*. In this fire he will put two kinds of incense, ordinary
F frankincense and incense scented with musk. While the incense is
E burning the magician will repeat the names of the angels who are in
[779] the fourth heaven, and the name of their leader, seven times. The
name of the leader of the angels in the fourth heaven is Kilīmya.

After he has finished this repetition he pronounces a formula beginning: "O angels, and leader of the angels of the fourth heaven! O Sun, which gives light all over the world!" Then he again addresses the sun, saying, "I pray you, O Sun, for the sake of the chief king [or governor, as the case may be, mentioning also his name and the name of his mother] that you may make his heart kind to so and so [*i.e.*, the suppliant]." Then the magician
F writes a charm and gives it to the petitioner.

789 The charm consists of a repetition of the names of the angels
in the fourth heaven, and it must be worn under the left arm. Such charms are usually enclosed in a small leather case, which is suspended by a cord from the neck in such a way that it hangs underneath the arm.

F
754 If a man wishes to injure an enemy by making him unconscious
he will go to a magician, who will tell him to bring some *'urūḳ el-fūweh* (roots of madder), the seeds of leeks, the fat of a crow, the fat of a tortoise (*fakrūn*),[2] and onion seeds. These ingredients, I am told, can be purchased at the shop of a village grocer. He must then light a fire and throw into it the five articles mentioned above. The smoke coming from this fire will make anyone who

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F [1] See pp. 154 f.
[779] [2] Professor Margoliouth tells me that *fakrūn* is a Berber word, so possibly this particular magical receipt was brought into the country by Arabs or Moors.

MAGICIANS AND MAGIC

This time the sheikh said, " I want silver anklets and nice clothes, 755
and she must not be miserable." 787

After a week the ceremony called *ṣulḥeh* (p. 186) was celebrated, the procedure being as follows. A sheep is killed, and some of 782
its blood is put on the dress of the woman who is possessed, 755
the people singing and playing their musical instruments all the 787
time. Seven candles are brought and placed round a large brass tray set in the centre of the room, either on the floor or on a stand. Seven kinds of sweetmeats, including dates, almonds, and raisins, [263]
are heaped up in the centre of the tray and covered with a bowl, on the top of which is placed one of the candles. All the seven candles are now lighted, and the people present, including the patient, eat, an extra supply being offered to the officiating magician, male or female. One of the people present hands the magician a five-piastre piece, which he dips in the blood of the sheep. At the *ṣulḥeh* held on behalf of the above-mentioned woman it was her brother who gave the money. The coin is wrapped in a piece of cotton stuff and given to the possessed man or woman, who will have it enclosed in a leather case and wear it always hung from the [789]
neck and passed under the left arm. This is a charm, and is supposed to be a present to the sheikh who possesses him or her. Such a charm is called a *lâzimeh* (an obligatory gift).

On one of the occasions when I was present at a *zâr* a man came in, sat down for some time, and then went out. I was told afterward that his sheikh did not like the songs that were being sung, [776]
and so he could not remain in the room. When one of the possessed 787
women who was present at this *zâr* stood up and danced 755
she began to bark like a dog, and her whole expression changed, her face becoming drawn and haggard. On another occasion a man became very violent, hurling himself about and striking out, so that it took three or four other men to hold him. When once this fit of excitement had passed his face assumed a calm and placid look.

Women on these occasions wear special ornaments (Fig. 120), if [292]
they can afford them, and must wear good clothes. People who [301]
are possessed by sheikhs are often supposed to be able to divine where a stolen article has been hidden. A young man of my acquaintance once lost a key. Thinking that one of his fellow- 787
students had stolen it, he went to a man who was possessed, and, after giving him a small sum of money, asked him which of the students had stolen it. The man told him that none of them had

members of her own sex, and gives them the same somewhat 757
drastic treatment. 759

A headache is sometimes cured in the following way. The magi- 755
cian in his capacity as medicine-man writes out a charm, which is 789
hung on the patient's head over the spot where the pain is greatest. ●
The charm must be written in a circle, and is, of course, in Arabic.
Fig. 123 is an exact copy, only transliterated.

Sīdī Aḥmed el-Bedawī is one of the most celebrated sheikhs 776
in Egypt. His tomb is at Ṭanṭa, where a great festival is held in 796
his honour every year.

The following is a prescrip-
tion for a disordered spleen. 757
The magician fetches leaves of 278
el-atl (tamarisk), pours red 262
vinegar on them, and boils this
mixture on the fire, afterward
pressing it through a sieve.
The patient must drink a coffee- [789]
cup of this medicine early in [755]
the morning, repeating the dose
for seven days, during which
time he must eat no solid food,
but should drink soup made by
boiling a fowl.

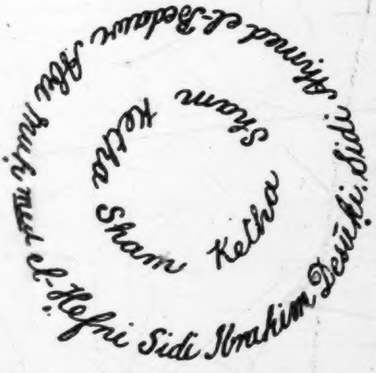

FIG. 123. CHARM TO CURE A HEADACHE

Distention of the stomach is a very common complaint among [169]
the peasants, due, of course, to acute indigestion. In some parts of Egypt a boiled crow is prescribed as a cure for this complaint, and the patient, I am told, quickly experiences relief after eating this most repulsive food. Another more reasonable cure is prescribed by a medicine-man of my acquaintance. A small quantity of flour is mixed with a little yeast early in the morning ; this must be left to rise in the sun till mid-day, when sufficient water is mixed with it to form a liquid. Soon after taking some of this preparation the patient must drink *some soup* made by boiling a fowl. The bowels will then act, and relief be soon experienced.

If a woman is suffering from prolonged labour, and birth is 845
difficult, her relatives will call in the aid of a magician. He writes 789
two charms, in the form of two magic squares, on two separate
pieces of paper. One square is suspended by a string from the
woman's waist, so that the inscribed paper hangs over her left

845 789 hip. The other charm is burned, and while it is burning the magician repeats the inscription on it once, after which the child is immediately born. An exact copy of the charm to be hung on the woman is reproduced here (Fig. 124). There is no key to it, so I was told.

The inscription recited by the magician is from the hundred and fourteenth chapter[1] of the Ḳorān, of which the following is a translation :

"Say, I fly for refuge unto the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, that He may deliver me from the mischief of the whisperer who slyly withdraweth, who whispereth evil suggestions into the breasts of men [*i.e.*, the Devil] ; from *ginn* and men." The magician then adds : "Make your servant so and so, the daughter of so and so [mother's name], bear quickly by the help of God Almighty."

[539]

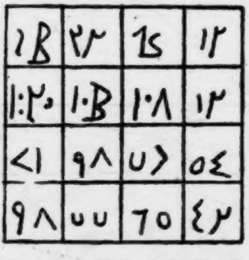

FIG. 124. THE CHARM TO BE SUSPENDED FROM THE WOMAN'S WAIST

755 789 776 Here is a cure for a headache: "Cure for a headache. Very excellent. The charm should be written on a piece of red leather and hung over the temple of the patient, and, whoever wears it, it [the headache] will certainly be removed by the will of God." These are the words of the medicine-man himself, translated as literally as possible from the Arabic. The inscription consists of nothing but letters, the first groups standing for Syrian names of God, and the others for the names of seven good sheikhs.

755 The following is a cure for fever. This prescription was given me by a sheikh who is renowned for his powers as a medicine-man, and he declares that by means of it he has cured many people. The sheikh takes four small pieces of paper, and on the first he writes "Hell is hot" ; on the second "Hell is cold" ; on the third "Hell is thirsty" ; and on the fourth "Hell is hungry." All the letters of each word in these inscriptions must be well separated from each other. He then puts seven seeds of ***kammūn iswid*** (black cumin) on each piece of paper. Having done this, he takes a short, narrow strip of leather, which must be old, such as is used for making sieves for winnowing. This piece of leather must be divided into four portions, one for each paper. A candle like those used in Coptic churches is broken into four pieces, and

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[1] One of those chapters of the Ḳorān which are often utilized as amulets.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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. Upper Egypt

THE VILLAGE MEDICINE-MAN

Each leaf should be rolled up separately, tied up with string, and 755
hung round the child's neck. It is believed that as soon as the leaves dry the child's coughing will stop.

This prescription, given as a cure for a cough, is, so I was told 757
by the sheikh who prescribed it, very old. Some seeds of the 278
cotton-plant which have been dried over the fire are pounded up into a powder. The patient should take some of this dry, early in the morning and also at night.

There are a number of cures for various 755
diseases which are well known to the people themselves, so that it is not always necessary to call in the aid of the 'doctor.' Among the large number which I have collected are the following.

Cure for a cough. A bunch of camel's [789] ●
hair is placed on the chest of the patient, and another bunch on the top of the head, the hair being first steeped in oil. Both bunches are kept in position by large handkerchiefs bound round the body and over the head. This is believed to make the patient perspire, after which the cough
goes. This cure is used for children [855]
only.

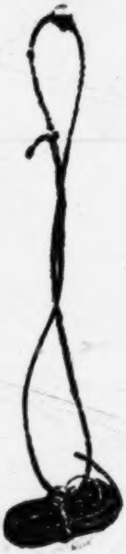

FIG. 125. CHARM TO CURE A CHILD'S COUGH

A man who lives in a small Upper
Egyptian village began, two or three 753
years ago, to suffer from rheumatism in
his legs. He got worse and worse, until 757
he was so crippled that he was unable to walk. He consulted 278
several doctors, so I was told, but they could do him no good. One day, when some of his friends came to see him, he told them how useless was all the medical treatment he had received. They therefore persuaded him to try the following remedy. Having made several cuts in both legs, he took some garlic and squeezed the juice of it over the cuts, rubbing it well in. The pain was awful, and the man wept from the agony. However, he persisted in the treatment every day for a fortnight. Each day a lot of pus came away—"yellow water" it was called when I was told about this remedy—and each day he got better, and the

THE FELLĀḤIN OF UPPER EGYPT

832 754 If a man loves a woman and wants to marry her, and she has no affection for him, he asks a female friend to assist him in the following way. The friend visits the woman at a time when she is likely to be combing her hair. It is the custom for women to conceal all their hair-combings in the wall of one of the rooms, between the bricks. The friend notices where the woman puts her hair-combings, and, at the first opportunity, steals some of the hair when the owner is not present, and gives it to the man. He takes it to a magician, who measures the length of each hair by the span of his hand. The magician then writes a spell, and, going to a grave, puts the hair inside it, keeping the spot a secret, for no one must know where the hair is hidden. He puts the spell in his pocket, and on some pretext or other (he may ask her for a cup of coffee, for example) visits the house of the woman whose hair he has buried. While he is sitting in her house he will produce the paper on which he has written the spell, and tell her to wear it
● [789] under her arm, stating that it will afford her excellent protection in the event of anyone else writing a spell against her to prevent her marrying. He thus persuades her to accept his spell, hinting that it may also bring her a good husband. The woman, of course, has no idea that the magician is in league with the man who wants to marry her. She accordingly accepts the spell, hangs it round her neck, and, immediately becoming madly in love with the man who is in love with her, is, of course, only too glad to marry him! This is a very common practice in many parts of Egypt.

754 789 It is also the custom to protect houses from the evil eye, and various decorations are employed for this purpose. Sometimes a plate or saucer is plastered into the wall just above the main entrance, or pieces of old carving, picked up from an ancient rubbish-mound, may be let into the masonry round about the door. The horns of sheep and other animals are also hung over the doorway as a charm to protect the house from the evil eye. A 'bride of the corn,' as already stated,[1] is hung *over the front door for the same* purpose. Inside the house, on the walls of the living-rooms, I have seen painted designs which the owner told me were put there to keep off the evil eye. Indeed, the devices resorted to for protecting houses, fields, animals, and people of all ages against this dreaded power are multitudinous, and to describe all those that I am acquainted with would require an entire book.

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[1] See p. 172.

F 755 791 when their petitioners are poor, will exercise their magic powers on behalf of the sufferers without exacting a fee.

F 776 492 The *'afārīt* may appear of their own will to ordinary individuals, sometimes in human form, but more usually in the shape of an animal, such as a dog, a cat, or a donkey. Again, they may be seen by animals when invisible to man. Therefore when a donkey refuses to pass a certain spot in the desert or cultivation his rider knows that an *'afrīt* bars the way, and he usually has to dismount and forcibly lead his ass past the danger zone.[1]

E 791 776 588 Some magicians are supposed to be married to female *'afārīt,* and to have children by them. This is a belief to be found, not only in Egypt, but in other countries also. A man thus married will never disclose the fact, but it becomes known among his relatives, who sometimes, looking for him in the place where he sleeps at night, will find that he has disappeared. They then suppose that he has gone to his wife "beneath the earth," but they will not dare speak of the matter to him. F E [581] This is believed of a magician who is well known to me, and who lives in a small village in Upper Egypt. His relatives have constantly urged him to marry, since the Egyptian peasants consider it a disgrace for a man to remain a bachelor. This magician has always refused to take to himself a wife, and has turned a deaf ear to the entreaties of his family. Accordingly, they now believe that he has an *'afrīteh* (feminine form of *'afrīt*) as his wife, as sometimes he is not found sleeping on his mat at night. Since he is a Copt he cannot take a human being as a second wife, as a Muslim would be able to do in similar circumstances. Such a supernatural wife helps her husband in all his work as a magician; indeed, his powers are often attributed entirely to the assistance he receives from his wife beneath the earth.

E 791 789 Most magicians possess books, usually manuscripts written by themselves, containing numbers of incantations for repetition, directions as to the performance of the accompanying rites, and also charms in the form of magic squares. E [408] These spells may have been in use in the magician's family for several generations, and handed down orally from father to son, but in more recent times committed to paper, now that the knowledge of writing is commoner among the villagers.

The Coptic magician mentioned above has several such manu-

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[1] *Cf.* the story of Balaam and his ass.

F

scripts, one of which he designates the " Book of Adam." He has 791
with great labour collected and written out magical cures and protections 789
for those troubled by *'afārīt*, and these form the contents
of one of the books. He learnt his art, so he told me, from another
magician, who was not a member of his family, but under whom
he served a long apprenticeship.

F

During my sojourn in Egypt I have been given many accounts 755
of the wonderful cures wrought by magicians on people possessed 753
by *'afārīt*. I wrote the details down when they were given to me, 123
and some of them may be interesting to my readers. The names of the people concerned, and the villages in which they live, are suppressed, in deference to their feelings; indeed, it would be a breach of confidence to divulge them. Such happenings are not usually discussed with foreigners, and were related to me only because I am regarded by the villagers as a trustworthy friend.

F

A young man in Upper Egypt became very angry with his wife 593
one night while she was sitting in front of the fire cooking the 152
evening meal. In his anger he took a pottery water-bottle (a *ḳulleh*) and struck her with it. In doing this he broke the bottle, and the water and some of the pieces of pottery fell into the fire,

F

extinguishing it. The next moment he heard a voice saying to 776
him, " You have broken the head of one of my children, so I will 152
come into you [*i.e.*, possess you]." The man thereupon became 158
mad, and began to tear his own face, and strike all those who came near him. Some of his relatives, seeing his terrible condition, proceeded to bind his hands behind his back and tie his feet together at the ankles, to prevent him doing further harm to himself or anyone else; but he continued to cry out and to speak meaningless words. His relatives took him to one doctor after another, but they could do him no good, and he continued in the same condition of violent madness.

F

At last, when he had remained in this state for three months, 756
they went to see a certain sheikh. This man is a magician, and 755
of a charitable character, and they begged him to cure the unfortunate man, pleading at the same time his poverty. The sheikh, who possesses (for he is still alive) many books of incantations and charms such as those mentioned above, listened sympathetically to their pleading, and consented to visit the sufferer, but he told them that they must first bring him a small piece of one of the garments belonging to the madman. They went home and

years of age, who used to be a village guard. He told a friend of C 625
mine that he knew that the ground on which the *'omdeh's* engine
now stands used to be the haunt of *'afārīt*, for, when doing patrols C
at night round the outskirts of the village, he had sometimes seen 776
on that spot a plough pulled by oxen and driven by a man, or 625
sometimes a threshing-machine with the oxen and their driver,
all made of fire. As this guard approached them he would cross C
himself, whereupon the *'afārīt* who had assumed these forms 788
would disappear.

If a woman fears that *'afārīt* are in her house she puts a *ḳulleh* F
of water on the floor of one of the rooms, and near it she places 776
some bread and salt, leaving them in this position during the 782
night. This protects the whole house, and effectually prevents
any *'afārīt* from entering it. F

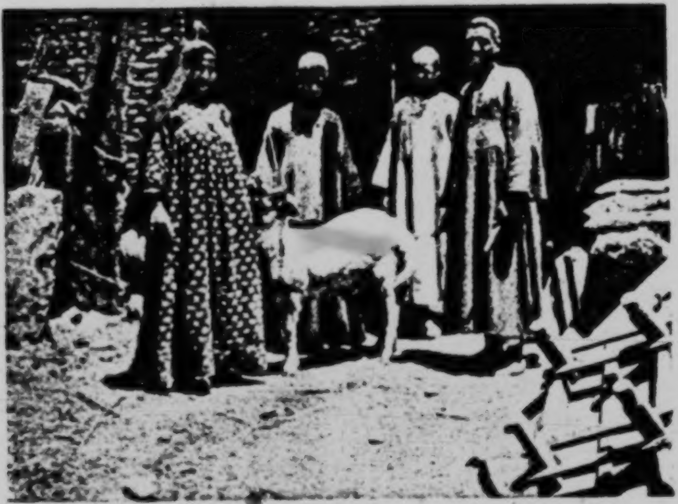
Nightmare and sleepwalking are supposed to be caused by 776
'afārīt, and if a child suffers from either of these complaints it is 828
a sign that an *'afrīt* has entered its body. This may have happened 513
because the child has done something wrong; perhaps, so it was 784
suggested to me, it had plucked some of the ears of corn from a 685
field belonging to a neighbour. If a Coptic child sleepwalks or
has nightmare its parents call in a priest, who tells them to bring C
seven *ḳanādīl* (old-fashioned saucer-lamps, with floating wicks). 828
The priest then asks for a jar of water, and prays seven special 513
prayers, burning incense meanwhile in a censer. As he finishes 782
one prayer he puts out one lamp, after a second prayer a second 755
lamp, and so on, till all the prayers are said and all the lamps
extinguished. He now tells the parents to place the jar of water
on the roof of the house, where it must remain for one night. On
the following morning the child is bathed in the water, after which,
it is believed, he will be cured. F

Among the Muslims if a child is affected in this way the parents 789 ●
go to a magician, who writes a charm of protection for the child
to wear. F

In addition to his soul (*rōḥ*) every human being is believed to 774
possess an *'afrīt* which leaves his body at death. In certain cir- 775
cumstances it may be a menace to any person who comes near it. 825
Animals also have an *'afrīt*. This belief especially attracted my attention recently. A little dog which had been badly injured took refuge in the bathroom of my house. My servant told me that he was sure it could not live, and that, before it died, he must

Gifts of food are distributed by the visitors in the names of their 796
dead; in fact, the funerary customs observed at this festival are 769
identical with those connected with *el-ʿÎd eṣ-Ṣughaiyar*.

The first day of *Khamasîn*, which falls in April and is called 796
Shemm en-Nesîm (the Smelling of the Zephyr), is observed in the
following way. Early in the morning a bunch of onions, or a 789
single onion, is hung up above the house-door. The owners of the house, more especially the women, may smell the onions before hanging them up. I was told that in some parts of Upper Egypt the onions, after being hung up, are squeezed or beaten with a stick, so that the juice from them may fall on the threshold. I have also been told that this custom is observed because it is believed to make people strong. I have heard, moreover, that in other parts of the country on the night before the festival people hang a bunch of onions over the places where they sleep. Early on the following morning each person on rising immediately takes his or her bunch of onions, smells it, and then throws it over his shoulder, after which he walks out of the house without looking back. My informant said it is believed that all evils are



[291]
[231]
[782]

FIG. 148. RAM TO BE SACRIFICED AT THE GREAT FESTIVAL IN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF A VOW

The mother who made the vow stands beside the animal.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

F 796 789 thus thrown away. I have not as yet come across this custom myself.

F [515] [823] On this day most of the people rise very early and go into the fields, spending the entire day out of doors. The men, at any rate in Fayūm Province, usually bathe in the Yūsuf Canal, the water of which is supposed to possess special *barakeh* on this occasion.[1]

F 796 789 278 On *Yōm Sabt en-Nūr*—the Sabbath, or Saturday, of the Light—people of both sexes and of all ages put into their eyes a small quantity of powder made from the placenta of a cat dried and pounded.[2] It is believed to make the eyes beautiful. To be told that you have the eyes of a cat is a great compliment (see p. 220).

C [297]

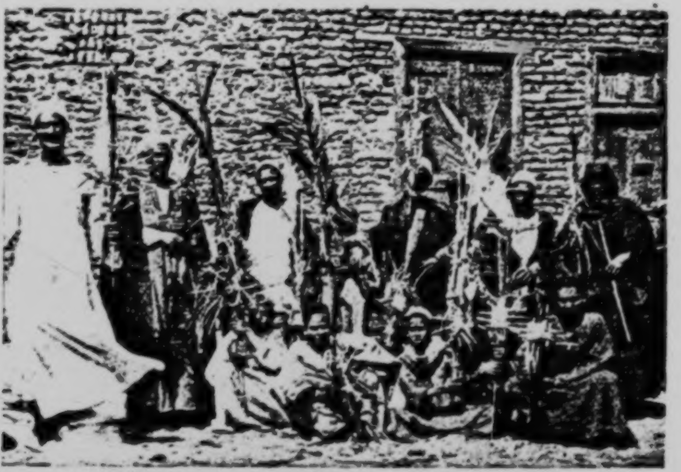


FIG. 149. PALM-BRANCHES PLAITED INTO VARIOUS SHAPES, USED IN A COPTIC CHURCH ON PALM SUNDAY

F [596]

C 796 On the Coptic Palm Sunday it is the custom to plait the leaves of palm-branches, without their being removed from the mid-rib, into a variety of forms, many of which are very intricate. Sometimes a round loaf of Eucharistic bread is enclosed within the plaited leaves. These palm-branches are taken to the church for the service held on this occasion. The illustration (Fig. 149) shows a group of men holding their palms, which they had taken to the church belonging to a Coptic monastery in the desert close

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[1] See p. 33.

[2] *Cf.* E. W. Lane, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 223.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt
Ancient Egypt MR5

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priesthood.[1] A relief in an Old Kingdom tomb-chapel at Saḳḳāreh[2] depicts the circumcision of two boys, the operation being performed, anyhow in one case, by a funerary priest (*ḥm-kȝ*, "servant of the *ka*"). I mention on p. 88 that, when the barber is about to cut off the foreskin, the boy is taken hold of and told not to be afraid. In the above-mentioned relief one of the operators is represented as saying: "Hold him, do not let him move about [?]," to which the assistant replies: "I will do your bidding."

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582

I refer on pp. 43, 47, and 90 to the early age at which modern Egyptian girls of the peasant class are often married. In Roman times we know that boys of fifteen married girls of twelve and thirteen.[3]

F
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789 ●

Charms to win love (pp. 90 ff., 224), and also to separate a man from his wife (*cf.* pp. 190 ff.), were employed in ancient Egypt, and examples of such are preserved in magical papyri dating from the Roman age.[4]

A
584
585

We possess a number of ancient Egyptian marriage contracts (*cf.* p. 92). The two earliest date from the reign of Takelōthis I or II, of the Twenty-second Dynasty (895–874 or 860–834 B.C.),[5] the rest mostly from Ptolemaic times.[6] A perfectly preserved marriage contract dating from the reign of the last native Egyptian Pharaoh, Nektanebos, was published a few years ago by Dr Junker.[7] As it is quite complete and as no English translation of it has ever appeared, I think the following may perhaps interest my readers:

> Year 15, second month of the season of Inundation, of Pharaoh Nektanebos (may he live, prosper, and be happy!): The *msḥ*[8] of Edfu, who belongeth to the Wall of Nektanebos,[9] Usir'an, son of Eskhons, whose mother is Tentmeḥet, saith to the lady Taubasti, daughter of Eskhons, whose mother is Tamunis: I have made thee my wife, I have given thee $\frac{5}{10}$ of a *deben* of silver, making $2\frac{1}{2}$ staters, making again $\frac{5}{10}$ of a *deben* of silver, as thy woman's gift.[10] If I abandon thee as wife [*i.e.*,

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[1] See Herodotus, ii, 36 f., 104; G. Elliot Smith and Warren R. Dawson, *Egyptian Mummies*, p. 93; A. M. Blackman, "Priest, Priesthood (Egyptian)" in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, pp. 299 f.

[2] J. Capart, *Une rue de tombeaux*, Pl. LXVI.

[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *Aegypten und aegyptisches Leben im Altertum*, p. 180.

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[113]

[4] F. Lexa, *La magie dans l'Egypte antique* (Paris, 1925), vol. ii, pp. 139 ff.

[5] G. Möller, *Zwei ägyptische Eheverträge aus vorsaïtische Zeit* (Berlin, 1918).

[6] See F. Ll. Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library* (Manchester, 1909), vol. iii, pp. 114 ff., 139 ff.

[7] H. Junker, *Papyrus Lonsdorfer I* (Vienna, 1921).

[8] Unknown title.

[9] Either a fort built by Nektanebos or a quarter of the town newly founded by him.

[10] See F. Ll. Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 114, note 8.

Ancient Egypt MR5

F A 585

entertained all the household of Pharaoh." This account suggests that in ancient as in modern times the bride's furniture was conveyed with some ceremony from her parents' house to that of her husband (p. 93); we also see that the ancient like the modern bridegroom used to entertain his male friends on the night of his marriage (p. 93).

F A 586

It is stated on p. 95 that a sum of money is sometimes paid by the party who applies for a divorce to the other party. That, as can be seen from the ancient marriage-contract translated above, and from those published by Professor Griffith,[1] was the prevailing custom in late Pharaonic and Ptolemaic Egypt. Ancient bills of divorcement are still extant, the earliest dating from the time of Darius, and some of them have been published and translated by Professor Griffith.[2]

F A 847 789 ●

It is interesting to observe, in connexion with the modern practice (p. 107) of a mother's attaching a small piece of fox-skin to the head of her last-born living child to ensure her bearing again, that the sign 𓄟 (*ms*), used in writing the verb *msy* (give birth) and its derivatives, consists in well-formed examples of three fox-skins tied together.[3] This suggests that there may have been some association of foxes with fertility in ancient Egypt.

F A 764 778 823

The water used for washing a dead Muslim is brought either from a mosque or from some sacred well or pool connected with a sheikh (p. 109). Similarly, in ancient times the formulæ pronounced while the washing of the corpse took place state that the water has issued from Elephantine, and so is the exudation of Osiris, or that it has been drawn from some sacred pool connected with the sun-cult, or that it is the efflux of the sun-god or the womb of the sky-goddess out of which the god emerged.[4]

F [794]

That the washer of the corpse may be a *fiḳīh* (p. 109) shows that this performance still possesses some, though probably quite vague, religious significance.

780

The utterly uncontrolled grief displayed by the women when

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[1] See p. 291, footnote 6.

[2] *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library*, vol. iii, p. 117.

[3] See A. M. Blackman, *Man*, vol. ix, pp. 9 f.; L. Borchardt, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, vol. xliv, pp. 75 f.; A. Erman, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, vol. xlv, p. 92.

[4] See A. M. Blackman, *Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et l'archéologie égyptiennes*, vol. xxxix, pp. 44 ff.; *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. xl, pp. 57–66, 86–91; *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. v, pp. 117 ff., 157 ff.

A [113]

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Ancient Egypt MR5

The modern *shādūf* (pp. 190 f.) finds its exact counterpart in paintings dating from the New Kingdom (Fig. 180). Wooden *shādūf*-hooks, the hooks from which the leather buckets are hung, have been found in graves of the Second to Third Dynasties (*c.* 3000 B.C.).[1]

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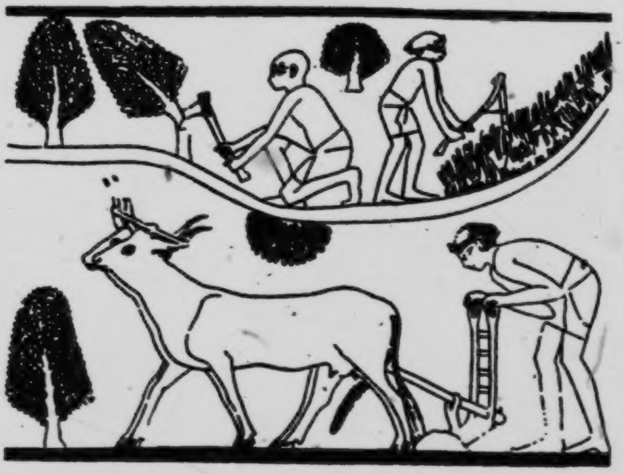

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[407]
[231]
[532]

FIG. 178. AN ANCIENT PLOUGH
After Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Nakht at Thebes*, Pl. XVIII.

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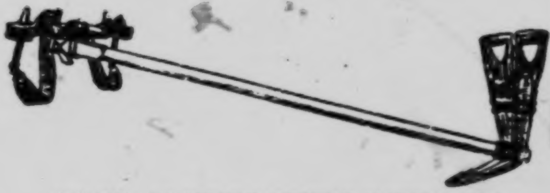
The object now known as *'arūset el-ḳamḥ*, 'the bride of the corn,' is depicted in several Theban tomb-chapels of the Eighteenth Dynasty,[2] and can possibly be traced back to the Old Kingdom in a different form.[3] It is stated on p. 172 that "in some parts of Egypt 'the bride of the corn' is temporarily placed on the heaps of grain



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[407]

FIG. 179. AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PLOUGH IN THE BERLIN MUSEUM
After L. Borchardt, *Priestergräber . . . vom Totentempel des Ne-user-rē*, p. 116.

Ne-user-rē (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 165 ff.; A. Wiedemann, *Das alte Ägypten*, p. 24 and note 3.

[1] W. M. F. Petrie, *Tarkhan*, Part I, Pl. X, 6.

[2] W. S. Blackman, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. viii, pp. 235 ff. and Pls. XXVI–XXIX.

[3] J. Capart, *La mise à mort du dieu en Égypte* (Paris, 1927).

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after the winnowing is completed, as a charm to secure a good harvest the following year." According to several ancient representations of winnowing this object was placed on the winnowing-floor while the winnowers were at work (Fig. 181), and an offering was laid before it consisting either of a vessel of water and dishes containing cakes, etc. (Fig. 182), or of a bowl of water only (Figs. 181 and 183).

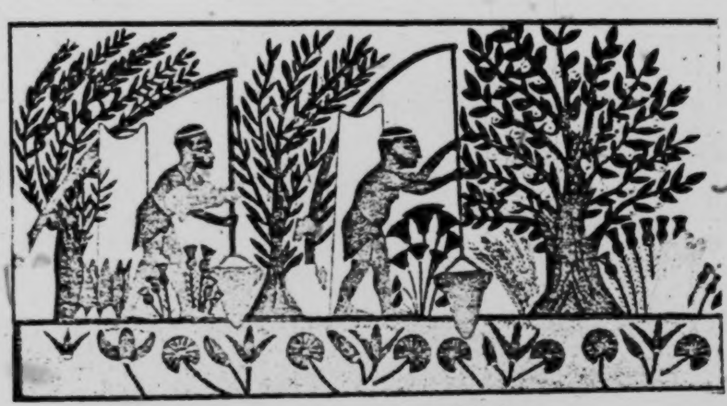

FIG. 180. ANCIENT SHAWĀDĪF
After A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, Pl. 35, Fig. 1.

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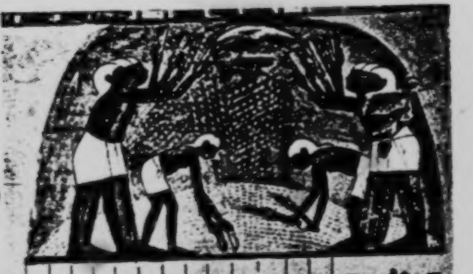

FIG 181. ABOVE: 'BRIDE OF THE CORN' ON THE EDGE OF THE WINNOWING-FLOOR. BELOW: SUPPLIES OF FOOD BESIDE THE THRESHING-FLOOR
After W. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Pl. 177.

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I mention (p. 172) that gifts of the first-fruits are bestowed on the *mueddin* of the village mosque, the *zummāreh*-player, the barber, and the *fuḳahā*, besides the deserving poor. This custom finds a parallel in ancient Egypt. In the

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second of the famous contracts of Djefaiḥap engraved on the walls of his tomb-chapel at Asyūṭ the following passage occurs: 431 465

> That which he [Djefaiḥap] gave to them [the priesthood of the temple of Upwawet of Asyūṭ] in return [*i.e.*, for bread presented to his statue] 241

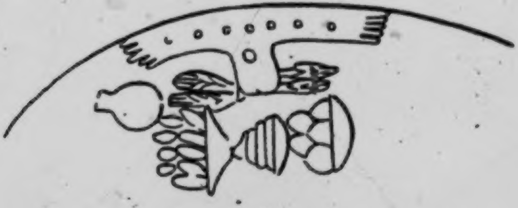

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FIG. 182. AN ANCIENT 'BRIDE OF THE CORN'
After Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Nakht at Thebes*, p. 63.

> was one *ḥeḳat* measure of northern barley for every field of the endowment [*pr-ḏt*], from the firstfruits of the harvest of the nomarch's estate, just as [or in the measure which] every commoner of Asyūṭ gives of the firstfruits of his harvest, for he was the first to cause every one of his peasants to give it to this temple from the firstfruits of his field.[1]

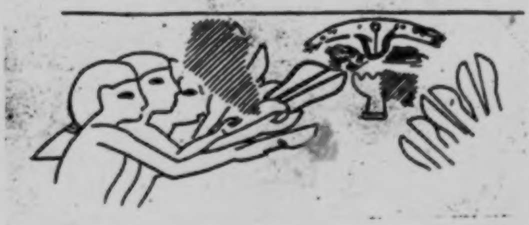

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FIG. 183. AN ANCIENT 'BRIDE OF THE CORN'
After Norman de Garis Davies, *ibid.*

The offering of the firstfruits to the *mueddin* and the *fuḳahā* is perhaps a survival of the custom referred to in the above quotation, the *mueddin*, the *fuḳahā*, and the mosque taking the place of the priests and the temple. The *fiḳih* in his funerary functions corresponds exactly to the ancient 'lector' (*ḫry-ḥb*). A F 789 ●

The custom of putting loaves of bread in the heaps of wheat (p. 173) may be a survival of the offerings originally made to the 782

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[1] G. A. Reisner, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. v, p. 83; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. i, § 546. A 113

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789 corn *'arûseh*, of which mention has been made above. Or both
782 this custom and that of bringing food to the threshing-floor and, after distributing it among friends, placing what is left in the heaps of *dura* to satisfy the *'afārīt* (pp. 176 f.) may be a survival of the presentation of offerings to the harvest-goddess Ernūtet. Such offerings to Ernūtet are often depicted in tomb-chapels of the New Kingdom. Thus Zeserkere'senb is shown making food-offerings

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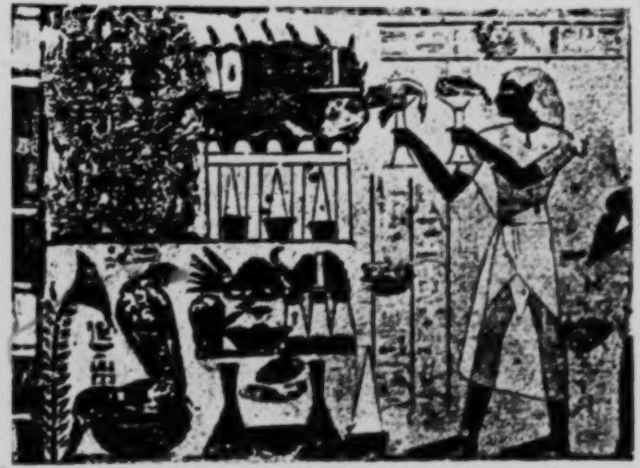

FIG. 184. MAKING OFFERING TO ERNŪTET
After W. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Pl. 143.

to that goddess "on the day in which the barley is measured, Pharmuthi 27th" (Fig. 184).[1]

In the tomb-chapels of Kha'emḥēt[2] and Nakht (Fig. 181) victuals of various sorts are represented as lying close to the threshing-floor, evidently an offering to the harvest-goddess, but at the same time reminding us at once of the custom still observed in connexion with the threshing of the *dura* (pp. 175 f.).

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The paying of the harvesters and ferryman in kind (pp. 173 f., 180) finds many a parallel in ancient Egyptian records.[3] It is to

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[1] See also J. G. Wilkinson, *The Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i, pp. 348, 385; A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 520.

[2] W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Pls. 189, 194.

[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 591; T. E. Peet, *Annals of Archæology and Anthropology*, vol. vii, p. 82.

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be noted in this connexion that the determinatives of the ancient Egyptian word *hmt*, the 'fee' paid to a ferryman, are those regularly affixed to words signifying foodstuffs—*i.e.*, an oval roll of bread above the three plural strokes, or a conical loaf and a jar of beer above a circular loaf.[1]

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The wooden fork used nowadays on the threshing-floor and for winnowing (p. 173 and Fig. 105) is exactly like the ancient one (Fig. 185). Also much the same sort of iron sickle as the modern one (p. 173, Fig. 101) was already in use in the Roman period (Fig. 186). At an earlier date the sickle consisted of a wooden body, in shape closely resembling the lower jawbone of an ox, in which flint teeth were inserted (Fig. 173).[2]

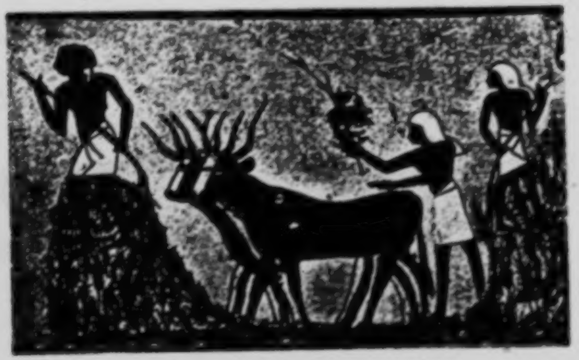

FIG. 185. ANCIENT HARVESTING-FORKS
After W. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Pl. 234.

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It is only necessary to read that part of chapter xiv in A. Erman and H. Ranke's *Aegypten und aegyptisches Leben im Altertum*[3] which deals with medical knowledge to see how nearly ancient and modern prescriptions and magico-medical cures are alike. Appended comments such as "Tried and true" (p. 207) find close parallels in the famous *Papyrus Ebers.*[4] In ancient as in modern times the 'physician' wrote out spells commanding a disease to depart,[5] and both adults and children were cured of sickness, or protected against both it and ghostly malice, by means of written charms

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[1] See A. H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 515 f.

[2] See W. M. F. Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara* (London, 1890), p. 29; *Illahun, Kahun, and Gurob* (London, 1891), pp. 53 ff.

[3] Pp. 409 ff.; see also A. Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 357 ff.

[4] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 356.

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or other amulets hung round the neck.[1] The collection of charms used by mothers to protect or cure their infants, referred to in note 1 below under the title of *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind* (*Spells for Mother and Child*), dates probably from the Hyksōs period (1788–1580 B.C.); it is preserved in the Berlin Museum. The object of one of the charms in this ancient collection [2] was to protect a child from a spirit of the female sex (possibly, according to Professor Erman, a dead woman), which was trying to take it from its mother. With this idea may be compared, perhaps, the modern one that a child's falling ill is due to the mother's *ḳarīneh* wishing to draw it away from her (p. 72). The spell in question reads as follows:

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> Run out, thou [fem.] that comest in the darkness, that slinkest [?] in with nose behind thee and face averted, that failest in that for which thou hast come.
>
> Hast thou come to kiss this child? I will not suffer thee to kiss him.
>
> Hast thou come to kill him? I will not suffer thee to kill him.
>
> Hast thou come to harm him? I will not suffer thee to harm him.
>
> Hast thou come to take him away? I will not suffer thee to take him from me.
>
> I have made his protection against thee with *'fty*-herbs which make . . . [?], with onions which harm thee, with honey which is sweet for mankind and bitter for the dead, with the . . . [?] of the *ibdw*-fish, with the jaw-bone of the . . . [?], with the back of the perch.

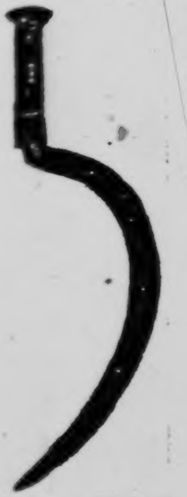

FIG. 186. IRON SICKLE OF ROMAN PERIOD

After A Guide to the Third and Fourth Egyptian Rooms in the British Museum (London, 1904), p. 41.

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My accounts of the eye-specialists on pp. 201 ff. and 211 f. may be compared with Herodotus' statement on the subject of Egyptian medicine [3]: "Each physician treats a single disorder, and no more. All places abound in physicians; some physicians are for the eyes, others for the head. . . ."

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The professions of magician and physician were no less closely

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[1] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 408; A. Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 30, 32, 35, etc., and *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 218 and note 6.

[2] A. Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, pp. 11 f.

[3] ii, 84.

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associated in ancient than they are in modern Egypt, as is evident 757 from Dr A. H. Gardiner's illuminating article, "Professional 759 Magicians in Ancient Egypt."[1] It is interesting to note also that 791 the two titles *swnw*, 'physician,' and *sꜣw*, 'amulet-man'—*i.e.*, 'maker' or 'purveyor of amulets'—are borne more than once by the same person.[2]

The necessity for a magician's being clean (p. 186) is strongly F emphasized in ancient Egyptian magical texts.[3] A

The modern belief that a person can be possessed by an *'afrit* 787 (pp. 231 f.) or a sheikh (pp. 187, 197 ff.) finds an ancient parallel 753 in the tale of *The Daughter of the Prince of Bakhtan and the* 755 *Possessing Spirit.*[4] The peacemaking feast held by people who 776 have appeased the possessing sheikh (pp. 186, 199 f.) is likewise parallelled in the same story, where we are told[5] that the spirit, while agreeing to leave the princess, demanded that a feast-day be celebrated with him and with the chief of Bakhtan, a demand F that was carried out. A

The magical ceremony described on p. 188 began with the 789 ● sweeping of the ground and the sprinkling of water.[6] In ancient 793 Egypt the priest, before beginning the toilet episodes of the temple liturgy, swept the floor of the sanctuary with a cloth.[7] As the king (the high-priest *par excellence*) is shown in a relief in the temple of Derr[8] holding a ewer as well as the cloth used for sweeping the floor, it is highly probable that the priest often sprinkled the floor as well as swept it. It was certainly the custom to sprinkle water while the floor of a house was being swept, as we learn from a wall-painting found by Professor Petrie at el-'Amarneh.[9] With regard to the lighting of a fire and the burning of a hoopoo's feathers (p. 188), it should be pointed out that the ancient magicians also burned various strange substances while pronouncing their spells.[10]

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[1] *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. xxxix (1917), pp. 31 ff.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

[3] A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, p. 482.

[4] G. Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt* (London, 1915), pp. 172 ff.; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iii, pp. 188 ff.

[5] J. H. Breasted, *op. cit.*, § 444.

[6] *Cf.* A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, p. 482.

[7] A. M. Blackman, "Worship (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. xii, p. 778.

[8] A. M. Blackman, *The Temple of Derr* (Cairo, 1913), Pl. LXIV, left.

[9] W. M. F. Petrie, *Tell el Amarna* (London, 1894), Pl. V.

[10] F. Ll. Griffith and H. Thompson, *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden* (London, 1904), pp. 37 ff.

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THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

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On pp. 189 f., 193 ff., 198, 229, 232, and 237 I speak of incense being burned, and of water being sometimes simultaneously poured out as well (p. 229), during the recitation of spells by a magician. As we learn from existing copies of the ancient Egyptian funerary liturgy and from the reliefs and paintings depicting its performance, incense was burned and water poured out at stated intervals during the recitation by the lector of the formulæ appropriate to the various episodes of which this liturgy was composed.[1]

F A 791 789

On pp. 192 ff. I describe how a magician brought a woman from a distant village to the room in which he recited the spell summoning her. Similarly, we read in *The Second Tale of Khamuas* that an Ethiopian sorcerer brought the Egyptian Pharaoh from Egypt to Ethiopia and back again to Egypt, all in the space of six hours, and that an Egyptian magician retaliated by bringing the viceroy of Ethiopia to Egypt and back again to Ethiopia in the same space of time.[2]

F A 754

Wax figures such as those mentioned on p. 197 were also used for sinister purposes in ancient Egypt.[3]

Superstitions about the evil eye evidently existed in ancient Egypt, but references to them are very rare in the literature, as has been pointed out by Dr A. H. Gardiner.[4] However, in the library of the temple of Horus at Edfu there was a book containing " spells for driving away the evil eye," and in a well-known hymn to Thōth dating from the New Kingdom occur the words : " O Thōth, if thou wilt be to me a champion, I will not fear the eye." [5]

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In connexion with the statement on p. 224 that horns of sheep and other animals are hung over doors as a charm against the evil eye, a passage in the *Pyramid Texts* might be quoted which describes how the door admitting to the royal pyramid precincts was adorned with bucrania and " sealed with two evil eyes, that Osiris may come not in this his evil coming." [6]

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On p. 236 I speak of the slaying of a victim on the threshold

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[1] See, *e.g.*, A. M. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, Part I, Pl. X ; Part II, Pl. X, p. 20 ; Part III, Pls. XXI ff., pp. 29 ff.

[2] F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests*, pp. 55 ff..

[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 407 ; see also J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iv, p. 209, §§ 454 f. ; *A History of Egypt* (London, 1906), p. 498.

[4] *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. xxxviii, p. 128.

[5] A. Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 306.

[6] J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 26 ; K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, §§ 1266 f.

father or grandmother (who wields great authority), a married 592
son, and some cousin or other on a prolonged visit.

When a fellah wishes to get married, if he is of age he 584
deals directly with the girl's father and pays him the price.
If he is young, that is less than eighteen, his mother will
try to find him the ideal bride among her relations or neighbours,
almost always in the same district. The girl will be [831]
fourteen or fifteen years of age, and by no means ignorant
of the facts of life. The law of 1923, however, has fixed 582
sixteen as the age of marriage (**).

The betrothal is celebrated by proxy in a contract of 583
marriage (*'aqd*). The dowry (*mahr*) which the man must 584
offer varies between L.E. 5 and L.E. 10. He pays two thirds
down, and binds himself to pay the rest by a document drawn
up by the *maazûn* or the *'omda*.

With this money the girl's parents go to the market-town to buy her trousseau, consisting of a red wedding-dress and gold bracelets (costing L.E. 1 or L.E. 2), and for furniture a water-jug, two copper cooking-pots (*halla*), a tub (*tisht*), a round table (*tablia*), and a brightly coloured chest cased in zinc. If the *mahr*, is large enough, they will also buy a mattress stuffed with cotton or straw, one or two pillows, and a quilted coverlet (*lihâf*).

On the wedding-day, that is to say the day the bride 585
leaves her father's house to go to her husband's, all these
things are loaded on to a camel hired for the occasion, and
paraded round the village. The young girls go before and
after, singing and clapping their hands, and the villagers
admire the treasures as they pass. This takes place in the
afternoon, and is followed by the departure of the bride.
A crowd of women and children press into the room to see
how she looks in her finery. The older women have bathed [302
her the evening before, and her hands and feet have been 789]
reddened with henna. Her marriageable friends, in order
to share her luck, have pinched her thighs. The procession
can now begin.

The bride is hidden by red or white veils, and rides on a
camel or in an old motorcar. Two or three women relatives
go with her under the canopy. The men fire shots into the
air (an Arab custom), while shrill tremolo cries (*zaghârît*) [152]
alternate with songs from the women.

or like a silver thread in the distance. He resorts to it more F 823
often than to his fellowmen. He does not pray to it, as
his ancestors did, but he constantly visits it. The Nile is in
his blood. There is the same intimate bond between the Nile
and the fellaheen as between the sea and the fishermen of
Brittany. They even call it *el Bahr*, the sea, and their
fields they call "shores" (*el rif* — plural *el ariaf* — the usual F [842
word for the Egyptian countryside) (*a). At High Nile
they believe women to be more fertile and men more healthy ; 827]
marriages are most often celebrated at this season. If a F
child is sickly or ill, his mother takes him on the Nile at [755]
this time, and makes him throw sweets and dates into the
clayey waters, with the words "Oh Nile, let my strength F
grow like your depth". A dying fellah, before he breathes [763]
his last, is given a final draught of its living water.

In the Coptic Mass there is the following prayer: C 782
"Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless this year the water of the 823
river. By Thy grace bring it to due height. Gladden the
face of the land, that the fields may have water and the crops
be multiplied."

The silt of the Nile has its part also in the rites of life F 843
and death. The fellâha, when her time is coming, crawls 844
to the brink of the water and takes up a handful of moist 261
earth, which she will swallow at the time of delivery to ensure
a successful birth.

When the *mizayen* cuts the child's hair for the first F 852
time, the hair ceremoniously cut off is not flung to the winds,
but carefully rolled into a ball of earth.

Professional mourners bedaub their breasts, heads, and F 764
arms with mud as a sign of grief. The body is put into the
earth without either coffin or clothes.

The fellaheen bury in the earth the jar containing their F 454
savings, and charms which they wish to take effect. Every 789
birth affects the soil ; the after-brith is buried inside the house, 844
and the umbilical cord, wrapped up in a little bag with a few
grains of corn, is dug into the father's field.

The fruits of the earth are still more closely involved in F 842
this peasant mysticism. The analogies between vegetable 812
life and the peasants' own extremely physical existence make
them believe in an interplay of fertility between the two.

The ceremonies of the seventh day, when the newly-born F 553
child is washed and given a name, often include the following 852

553 rite. Three rush baskets filled with different kinds of grain
852 are brought into the room. One supports the sieve in which
the infant is lying. When it is time for the bath, the midwife shakes the sieve, as if to sift both the child and the corn. Then she puts the grain back into the basket, wraps up the child and sprinkles a few grains upon it.

853 The word *fitâma*, used for the weaning of children, is
243 also used for the tenth and last watering of the maize. Sweet
431 cakes are given to the workers that day, as to the mother,
465 for it is the last day of suckling.

243 Harvest is always accompanied by symbolic acts.
777 Before reaping begins, the best ears are taken and plaited
789 into a kind of doll called the 'Bride of the Corn', which is
hung up in the house to bring good luck during the ensuing year. Similarly, to bind the chain of life, the biggest grains are mixed with the seed for the next sowing, and a few fine loaves are slipped into the heap on the threshing-floor to be winnowed and sieved.

782 Mgr Khouzam, reporting on his pastoral visit in Novem-
789 ber 1937, wrote as follows: "On entering their houses, I
blessed water, bread and corn. They drank some of the water and used the rest to sprinkle themselves, their cattle and their houses. The corn they flung into their fields. As for the bread, I was made to break it and eat a little of it. The rest they kept among their stores that God might bless what they had laid by."

789 The joy of harvest shines also on those who have not
465 ploughed, but whose work in the village has benefited the
431 whole community. Tradition allots the first fruits of the
735 harvest to the reciter, the barber, the cantor of the mosque,
246 the schoolmaster and the carpenter. After these have
claimed their sheaves, the poor come to glean their share. Cotton-picking, however, gives rise to no sort of ceremony. This is perhaps because cotton has only recently been introduced; or because it is grown for profit and not for daily bread ([illegible]).

245 The date palm, on the contrary, is as old as Egyptian agriculture itself, and figures at all times in the life of the people. They turn to this tree for shade and for roofing, for beds and coops, for ropes and brushes. We have seen its

Ignorant and stupid people are their customers, who ask them 787
to raise the veil from the face of their future lot. This is the
procedure: first the man opens the "Book," which will be
variegated with florid decorations and bright colours. Next,
he gazes intently into the face of the fool sitting before him,
and critically examines his appearance and guesses his nature
and circumstances. The latter answers him in accordance
with what he has divined. For example, he will say to him,
"It appears that you are very worried because of poverty and
straightened circumstances, nevertheless, cheer up, for your
Lord will give you an easy time after this poverty, and in a
short while [p. 36] your pockets will be packed tight with
money, so that you will be puzzled as to how to spend it." Or
he will say to him, "You do not sleep all night long because of
thinking, but relief from Allah is at hand, for, verily, He has
sent to you one who will endeavour to solve the problem that
is before you, and who will save you from it. Only the 'Book'
says, that you must pay money and allow me to write a talisman [998]
so that your care and grief may vanish, and your affair may
be accomplished," and other similar statements.

XV

AMULETS AND TALISMANS

Readers know from what precedes that those who practise 778
bibliomancy, and divination with sand and shells, do not 789
confine themselves to the foregoing which is nothing more than 732
the diagnosis and explanation of troubles, but they lay ambitious claim to a knowledge of the secrets of curing by means of the writing of amulets and talismans[1] to induce love.

Every stupid woman seeks the help of these charlatans on the supposition, say, that her neighbour or her fellow-wife has written against her what will make her husband hate her. So the charlatans write for her some names which are absolutely

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[1] [*Aḥgiba* plural of *ḥigāb*.]

778 789 832 without connotation, such as Shamhūrish, Dahinish, and Budūḥ, etc.[1] on a patch of paper in disjointed letters. This clearly demonstrates the way by which they mislead the minds of simpletons. They also order them to burn these as incense with substances known to them, which help, in their opinion, to plant love in the heart. Or they write Rawwāsh ibn Hawwāsh or Zuḥal (i.e. Saturn), etc. [p. 37] in the manner indicated, and then charge them to fumigate them with herring skin at the time when the people concerned cohabit, if the aim be the creation of hatred and dislike between her husband and the woman he loves and desires. And there is no doubt that quacks such as these are a menace to all praiseworthy characteristics and noble customs, chiefly because by their endeavouring to cause a separation, by means of imagination, between a husband and his deluded wife, they obtain access, in the majority of cases, to the circumstances of the family, in a manner that is other than admirable. This they [789] accomplish because during the shell-divining and bibliomancy and amulet-fabrication they learn the name of the woman, and the names of the members of her family, and their deep secrets. As a result, they do all they can to create mischief and ruin.

778 789 791 The writing of amulets in the villages is not undertaken by Moors only, but there are other individuals who have special haunts which are known to the *fellāḥīn*.

In the neighbourhood of Kôm al-Akhḍar in the Buḥaira Province, the reputation of a number of them was spread abroad to the effect that they were able to fabricate amulets and talismans, until the value of one of them was not less than a hundred piastres [a little more than a pound sterling]. They then order the owner of the amulet not to open it, for if he do,

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[779] [1] [Names of magic import. Shamhūrish, or its variant, Samhūrish, appears in Islamic angelology as the title of a celestial being. There are many such figures, no doubt of Gnostic, or even earlier, origin. E. Blochet in his *Études sur le Gnosticisme musulmane* (in the *Rivisti degli Studi Orientali*, 1909, p. 719 ff.), identifies him with St. George of the Apocryphal Acts. He says (p. 726) that the name has no meaning either in Hebrew, in Aramaic, or in Greek; so he finds an Iranian parallel. But I would suggest that the word ultimately comes from the Hebrew Shemhammephoresh, i.e., the Ineffable Name of God.

[751] [801] As for *Budūḥ*, it is the well-known group of letters often found in Arabic talismanic squares, and still written on envelopes as a prophylactic. The numerical value equals 2468. Tr.]

the effect anticipated from it will depart without avail. For a 778
certain friend, whom I know, they wrote an amulet which did 784
not produce the desired result, in spite of his strict adherence 791
to their wishes. (This was only that Allah might reveal to him their falsehood and wickedness.) It so happened that when this friend was in despair he exercised his skill on the covering of the talisman, which was [p. 38] of lead, until he opened it. When the paper inside it appeared, he found it did not contain anything at all in the way of writing. Yet he did not cease in his mind to place some credence in the soundness of amulets and talismans, for when he saw that the circumstances were such, he was afraid in his mind lest the writing had flown away because he desired an acquaintance with what was inside it, and so he did not stop performing the requirements prescribed to him by the quacks. What added to his hallucination was the fact that he told his case to an ignoramus, led astray like himself, and he began upbraiding him for what he had done, and proved to him that no one dared to do what he had done unless he had been blinded, and the sign-posts of his vision had been effaced.

Let us return to the shell-diviners. These women do not 787
confine themselves merely to enticing people into their nets 791
in the normal way, but they vie with one another in practical "healing." They have thus often been the cause of the setting of the sun of life for many persons of note both men and women. One, whose word I cannot doubt, informed me that
he was inhabiting a neighbouring dwelling in which was a girl 753
suffering from chlorosis ("*yellowness*" [sic]) whose mother 764
went to one of the shell-diviners and informed her of her daughter's condition. The "old wife" assured her that a *jinnī* had fallen in love with her daughter, and had entered into every part of her body and was the cause of her complaint.

When our poor friend heard that, she could not resist throwing herself at the feet of the "old wife," beseeching her to take 756
pity and cast out the *jinnī*. After pretending to refuse and put difficulties in the way, the "old wife" at length granted
her request, and accompanied her to her dwelling. As soon 755
as she saw the patient [p. 39] she ordered them to bring her half a pound of metallic lead and melt it over a fire. When

Whenever the *Atr* is brought to him he takes it in his two hands 787
leaving between them a distance which he measures with his 791
finger to begin with, then after that he begins mumbling and 755
exorcising, while placing the *Atr* near his mouth. Then when he has finished this he measures it a second time, and so on. Then he informs the messenger that the *Atr* has increased and that it is a prognostic of a speedy cure and a long life. Beyond 755
this nothing will result unless by the writing of a talisman. 789
One cannot avoid observing here that the *Faḳīh* looks out for the state of the mother of the patient. If he sees her weeping and in distress, and she has told him of the violence and continuance of the patient's illness, then after the second measuring he tells her that the *Atr* has not increased, and that it is necessary to write a talisman (*ḥigāb*) from which will result every advantage and blessing (*baraka*) for the patient. Then if the patient is cured, his people afterwards say that he was cured only through the talisman of the Faḳīh ; but if he dies, they say that the *Atr* did not increase, and the *Faḳīh*, whatever happens, is regarded by them as truthful.

XVII

[p. 41] "THE TIED" (AL-MARBŪṬ)

By this is meant that some quacks skilled in the knowledge of 754
spirits are hired by certain individuals to "prescribe" against 832
their enemies "*tying*," that is, impotence in time of coition. The truth of the matter is that since pudicity and perplexity are special properties of some men, they sometimes assert their mastery in the days of wedlock. So that the bridegroom believes that this is simply the result of what some quack doctor has done. And what increases the illusion in its effect on him is that he has listened since childhood to such tales of "*tying*," and believed in this absurd "art."

And as for the manner of releasing the "*Tied*," it is as 000

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

757 One of the methods of "cure" is to draw a cross[1] on the
temple of the patient with saliva. This way, if it be free from
[755] the harm of vein-cutting, is yet a bad innovation, and will not
please those who love the Divine Law, because it may give
place to the [p. 63] belief of foolish and simple people, instead
751 of to truth and reality. We have even seen many fools who
304 have tattooed[2] crosses upon their temples to guard against the
evil of *Ṣudā'*.

755 We shall now mention by way of wonder and curiosity,
not without doubt and scepticism, a method of which the success is famous in all parts of Egypt for the "cure" of this disease. It is a charm (*'azīma*) which is recited by His Excellency Mahdī Bey, Treasurer of the Public Debt, and those afflicted with headache are immediately "cured." The matter has been verified by experiments and testified to by eyewitnesses. It has been emphatically stated to me that many from the farthest parts of Egypt afflicted with this ailment used to come to the capital with this object, and would return after having obtained a perfect "cure." All I knew about the effect of the charm upon the sick, was that there was no danger in it to life. It would have been well if His Excellency had explained it and imparted it to people in whose veracity one could rely. It is indeed, His Excellency's duty towards humanity in view of the affliction of those tormented with this very oppressive ailment.

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[1] [Many Moslem women wear crosses, or hang them on their children to
[751] drive away evil spirits, or *'afārīt*. At first sight it appears strange that
Moslems should be found wearing the Christian emblem. But it is really a
[776] case of sympathetic magic. The evil spirits are conceived as being of Christian
origin and therefore unwilling to approach anyone protected by Christian
● [789] symbols. Miss Blackman, *op. cit.*, p. 65, has apparently overlooked this
explanation. The old story of St. Dunstan driving away the Devil by means of a horse's shoe, the devil's own emblem is a similar case. I am indebted to Miss A. Gibson, M.A., formerly headmistress of the Scottish School for Girls in Alexandria, Egypt, for this reference. We still use horse shoes for good luck without thinking of their long folk-history. For the prophylactic value of the cross among Moslems reference may be made to F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, I. pp. 30–31. Tr.]

[2] [For examples of tattooing amongst certain Egyptian lower-class types, see article in the *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*, vol. V. (1923). Willmore, *Spoken Arabic of Egypt*, pp. 364–5 gives some tattooing superstitions. See also Dr. Fouquet: *Le tatouage médical en Égypte dans l'antiquité et à l'époque actuelle* (*Archives d'Anthropologie criminelle*), Lyon xiii, 1899, p. 270 ff. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

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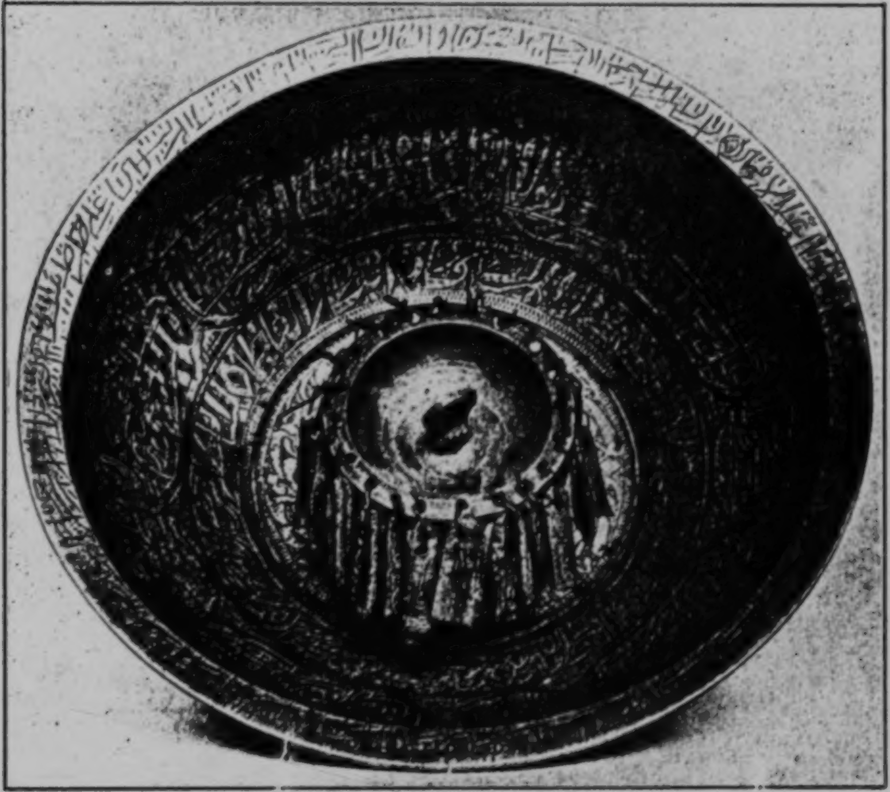
Facing p. 69



THE "FEAR" CUP (*Ṭāsat-al-Tarba*)

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

XXXIX

[p. 82.] THE "FEAR" CUP (ṬĀSAT-AL-TARBA)

THEY say that if there befall a man what throws into his 164
heart nervousness and terror, there is no escape from his being 153
struck either, with venereal disease [*zuhri*] (there is no need to
expose the lies of these folk, since it is generally accepted that
venereal disease is contagious and never arises from imagination), or, *yaraḳān* (" jaundice ") (which they use generally as a
name for nervous diseases). And the " cure " for both of 755
these afflictions is that water should be placed in the " *Fear*" 789
Cup.[1] It is a vessel of brass engraved with the figures of birds [915]
or inscribed with obscure writings, and after it is exposed to
the dew by night, the invalid drinks it and is " cured."

One curious thing is that there is found suspended round the border of the cup forty pieces of brass engraved like the foregoing, and when one of these pieces is lost, there is lost with it the benefit which was to be expected from the taking of the water placed in the cup. I have asked many people about this folly and they have replied: " We found our ancestors doing this and we are driven to do likewise."

The real cause of the disease. It is now established that 753
venereal disease is a disease that is contagious, and not produced of itself, but by inheritance from forebears, or the result of secret contact. So that this false opinion is invalidated.

But these influences are the result of fear and perhaps they 000

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[1] [The following is a rough description of this type of medicine bowl from one in the possession of the translator (plate 3). The dimensions of the bowl are 7½ ins. in diameter and fully 2 ins. in height. The inner cup is 2½ ins. in diameter and 1¼ in. in height. Round the rim of the inner cup are twenty little holes, from which are suspended forty keys, two from each hole. Each [915]
key bears an inscription on each side. These are not easily decipherable, but appear to be some of the *Asmâ' al-ḥusnâ*, or *most beautiful names of Allah*. A common one is *Ghafûr* (the forgiver). By loosening the central screw the inner cup with its keys may be turned round to any part of the bowl. The inscriptions are too long to translate here. Besides containing well-known passages from the *Koran*, there are likewise pious exclamations and invocations of the archangels, such as, oh Gabriel! (*Yâ Gibr'îl*), oh Michael! (*Yâ Mîkâ'îl*) oh 'Azra'îl, etc. On the extreme edge of the bowl there are what appear to be numbers of magical import. A slightly different example is illustrated by Zwemer in his *Influence of Animism on Islam*, p. 180. Tr.]

claiming payment. Had it been in the past centuries, people 754
would have retaliated on the "old wife." (May Allah wage 753
war upon Ignorance !)

To protect camels from "envy," an old shoe is hung upon 751
its temple, but I do not know the reason for this. 825

On the breast of a horse the tooth of a hyena is hung. This 754
old absurdity is the custom current amongst horse-fanciers, of bedecking their steeds with this tooth which they reckon the greatest of ornaments.

On a donkey a wolf's tooth is hung.

Children have put in their hair a piece of *fāsūkh* or *jāwī*, and they hang upon their necks pieces of the bones of the eagle, or of any animal of prey, along with some shells.

It happens sometimes on a day that a milch cow refuses its milk because of some disease or other cause. So the "old wife" announces [p. 98] to them that it is "envied" and
orders the placing of its halter in a forsaken grave until the [789]
cow gives milk.

As for our discourse on envy, if we suppose it to be true, then 753
what happens daily in the provinces is not of that nature. On the contrary, they are symptoms of various diseases such as we have previously diagnosed. In most cases they are marsh fevers which arise from the water-courses and swamps surrounding the villages, and which, in the time of ploughing, are very common, especially after irrigation and the ploughing of the wheat and clover land, owing to the great putrefaction of the vegetable refuse on the land.

As for getting rid of swamps, that is a matter entrusted to the intelligent members of the community who apprehend the destruction of their own health and that of their children. In ploughing it is necessary for ploughmen to take a good square meal before undertaking the work, and to protect their heads from the influence of the sun.

1791 he had made up his mind to travel on the morrow to the Nile Valley. Then my heart was aflutter at this news, and I begged him to delay his journey until after the morrow, until I had given him my cash to double. He demurred a little, then after my much pleading, he consented at last. So I handed him all my wealth, the profits of fifteen years, four hundred pounds. He took it and disappeared, and did not return from that time."

LI

THE SHE-MULE OF THE THRONE OR OF THE TENTH (BAGHLAT-AL-'ARSH AU AL-'ASHR)

776 189 THERE is nothing more extraordinary than this nonsense. They say that on the night of the twenty-seventh of the month Rajab, or according to others on the night of the *tenth* of the month Muḥarram,[1] as can be gathered from its name, there is to be seen a black she-mule which goes round all the cultivated districts, with a saddle-bag full of gold on her back, and, above the saddle-bag, the head [p. 101] of a slave severed from its trunk. They say that whoever chances upon her, must take what goods are in the saddle-bag and place instead barley for the mule. For this reason the silly ones amongst the country folk spend all their nights awake on the look out for the footprints of the she-mule.

An old man of advanced age (one of those who still trust in this error but who told his story after the manner of a jest) said to me: I was sitting along with three of my companions at the house of a friend of ours in the middle of the road, on the night appointed for the passing of the mule. (It is said that she passes along the best path.) We determined upon spending the whole night in watching. When we were in the last third

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[805] [196] [185] [1] [The tenth day of al-Muḥarram, the first month of the Moslem year, has a sacred significance amongst the faithful. It is the *'Āshūrā*, or voluntary fast day observed by the *sunnīs*, or orthodox Moslems, while on the same day the *shī'as*, or sectarians of Islam, commemorate the fatal conflict at Kerbela, when the Prophet's grandson Ḥusain was killed (in A.D. 680).]

of the night and drowsiness was on the point of overcoming us, behold we heard the trample of hoofs near the house, and it suddenly occurred to us that it might be the mule. Our thought was not groundless for we actually encountered a black mule carrying a sack, and in the midst of the sack something projecting which we thought to be the severed head. So the master of the house led the mule to his home (after there was almost a conflict amongst us almost to the shedding of blood, each wanting to take the mule to his home in order to be "blessed" by it, or more likely in order that it might become accustomed to be present every year in his house. The result was that we came to an agreement, through fear of the arrival of some new shareholder who would diminish the shares). So when the mule graced the home of our host he hastened to offer an unstinted measure of wheat and barley as food for the noble animal. Meanwhile one of our friends was judging the sack from its outside appearance. He informed us that it was stuffed with gold dust and not cash. His proof of that was that he bit with his teeth on one of the corners of the sack and the gold dust yielded under his molars. Then the master of the house chid him and said: "Wilt thou scoff at the She-Mule of the Throne?" Then that fellow answered him by grasping him by the throat, saying: "Wilt thou not be quiet after we have allowed you to have a private view of her noble self, that you seek to fall betwen her and me!" [p. 102]. Both fell a-boxing until their voices rose and a company of the village night-watchmen assembled. Just then a black servant, a muleteer, appeared, and asked them to stop (saying): "Did you not see a mule with a sack on its back? It has strayed from the road and it is loaded with ashes (*kuṣrmill*)." Those present were astonished, and for a moment the earth almost shook under us. The people knew our ignorance. But as for the mule, it had finished eating what had been given to it, and the muleteer took it away, laughing at us.

776
789

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

832 789 782 The manner of the act was (for the Shaikha) to go with the unfortunate woman, whose husband had been turned from her, to a region far from sight where the "operator" (*mushabshiba*) dyes her face and her hands with a black substance and [309] [299] puts on black clothing, and lets her hair down upon her shoulder and grasps in her hand three fruits. Then she takes the "patient" (*mushabshab lahā*) by her side and burns incense, [316] placing in it ḥashīsh and *'anzarūt* (or *Anzarūt*)[1] and *mansir* (?) or *mānistir* (?) and *faḥīsala* (I do not know its real medical name). Thereafter she says:

Yā 'afārīt yā 'afārīt	Oh, Spirits! Oh, Spirits!
[539] [996] *Yā ginn al-gibāl*	Oh, Jinn of the Mountains!
Yā sukkān al-buhūr	Oh, dwellers of the seas!
Yā 'ummār al-burūr	Oh, inhabitants of lands!
Yā bu'ād fi'l-barrīya	Oh, far off folk in the desert!
Yā ḳātilīn al-darrīya[2]	Oh, slayers of offspring!
Yā mukhālifīn Sulīmān	Oh, oppcnents of Solomon[3]
Yā mubarṭi'īn fi'l-widyān	Oh, gallopers in valleys!

I cry to you. Come to me, and help me with the stars of the sky.

Then it is said that the atmosphere becomes dusty and the day is changed to night, and the darkness becomes intensified, while she continues her spell, saying:

Good evening to you, oh, stars of evening! Oh, yellow ones like apricots! I have smitten him with three fruits (*thamarāt*) smite ye him with three live coals (*jamarāt*). (Thereupon she names the person in the case, and casts the fruits upon an image [p. 5] of the person made of clay which is in front of her). One ember will come upon his eyes so that he will see none but her [i.e. his forsaken wife]; and an ember upon his tongue so that he will speak with none but her; and an ember upon his ears so that he will listen to none but her. Good

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[1] [Gum of a thorny tree that grows in the mountains of Persia. See the *Tadhkara* of Dā'ūd al-Anṭākī, s.v. According to Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires arabes*, it is *trifolium odoratum*. Tr.]

[2] [i.e. *al-Dharriya*.]

[3] [These are the Jinn who, according to Moslem legends, were forced to assist King Solomon in his works of magic. Tr.]

evening to you, oh, our new moon! you whose father is 832
Friday [the Moslem holy day], and whose mother is the Festival! 782
Oh, Glorious Venus with the wakeful eyes! Take for me from 789
the hair of so and so, the son of so and so, three hairs. Pull them off and mix them and bring them and leave them at the door of so and so the daughter of so and so. Good evening to you, oh, Sindās! (Sindās is said to be the name of the god of [776]
lust and debauchery). Oh, Sindās! Oh, Knower of secrets and of . . . (here she names a certain organ of the fair sex, which it is not allowable to mention). (At the same time the Shaikha uncovers her genital organs and brings one of her shoes and beats that organ seven times until its "servant," who is named Sindās, as mentioned above, appears). Oh, Sindās! You have helpers! Oh, Sindās! Where are your brethren! Bring him and bind him and at her door release him! (And hereupon she orders the "patient" to recite the special charm for the purpose, as follows:)

Gāga! Oh, Gāga![1] Decide this matter (*hāga*). Bring him with dust on his head and his shoe in my . . . (and she mentions an expression for one of her members which it is not fitting to mention) and his turban in my girdle (*dikka*), hearing no speech but mine. (Then the Shaikha goes back to the completion of her original spell, and points with her hand to the sky, saying:)

Oh, whirlwind! Oh, clever one! You have satans with you!

Drag him and beat him, and carry him away to the home of this poor woman, and leave him there. Oh, Ṣābī! [776]
Oh, Ṣābī![2] Oh, Hearer and Answerer! Bring so and so, the son of so and so, improved and not enraged. If he enters, well and good, and if he goes off, well and good. Let my star and his star be with you in agreement!

(At this time, it is said, the "Helpers" [or Jinn] arrive, of various shapes and appearances, and hearken to the commands of the Shaikha and go off in a hurry after paying tokens of honour and respect.)

This is the regular form of the *Shabshaba*. And if the person

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[1] [Gāga is the goddess of guidance.]
[2] [The name of a king of the Unbelieving Jinn.]

832 with her has a nervous illness, due to the Jinn, she recites the
782 charm herself along with some modification in the forms of the
789 commands that issue from her Ladyship the *Shaikha*, with a
● slight revision of their clauses.

[p. 7.] *The true Explanation.* When I wrote my chapters
787 in Part One on Fraternizing with the Jinn (p. 32 ff) and on the
789 *Nazīl* (p. 30 f), I wrote them in the true belief that the Jinn
134 could not be enslaved. That was after I studied many terrifying books in the Khedivial Library in the Darb al-Gamāmīz (Cairo)[1] constituting almost a quarter of its contents. But I was not the only one who sought what was new, out of a natural love for study which is innate in mankind. For there reached me treatises printed recently in Europe in different languages, whose authors talked about a new subject which they named Spiritism, that is, Spiritualism, or the power of employing spirits. The authors all agreed in what they related of their experiences, or what reached their ears from trustworthy sources, that it is possible to employ the immaterial in the destiny of the material. They differed only at this juncture as to whether they are animal electric rays, or spirits (Jinn) bewitching by the power of incensing and special incantations. Our objection to the holders of the former belief is that they are unable to employ these rays to influence either a person whom the medium (" influencer ") has not seen, or the medium himself. It is as if someone asked the " enchanter " to influence someone whom neither of the two knew, but [p. 8] whose name alone they heard. In spite of this they mention in their treatises that it is possible to employ this spirit for any purpose whatsoever in the case of any person they wish, whether known to them, or unknown.

As for the case of a known person, we agree with their belief,
[754] since we have seen in the matter of Envy (see Part One, p. 78]
what accounts for that.

791 As for the holders of the second belief, namely the employ-
787 ment of spirits (or Jinn) by a special way, would that I knew what to say to-day to the learned ones of the civilised world who, until ten years ago, used to lay it down that knowledge was preceded by reason and fortified by experience. But " in

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[1] [Now called the Royal Library and located at Bāb al-Khalḳ. Tr.]

755 except in Allah ! I charm you and seek to enchant you from my
754 eye and the eye of your mother, and your father, and the eye of the people who "envied" you. I charm you and seek to enchant you even as Mohammed charmed his she-camel. He placed for her fodder, which she tasted. She had been refactory; she became docile."

Strange to say, I saw an "old wife" who, during the charm, was moving her hand in front of the eyes of the "Envied" and his sides. And she was yawning, and influencing him until he was yawning too. She did not stop this until the "Envied" poured with perspiration and slept during the charm. It is a method somewhat resembling magnetic hypnotism. The truth of the matter is that it suits that ailment, because it is successful, as we said in Part I, page 78, because of electric magnetic influence.

VI

THE CHARM OF 'ĀSHŪRĀ'[1]

● 789 At the new moon of Muḥarram every year you see people going about the streets carrying on their heads salt, or sugar or coriander (*kuzbara*) or some other things. These are called *Raḳwātīya*, from *Raḳwa* a charm. Women and young men invite them to perform this charm. So they enter houses and place the salt and the coriander upon the fire and utter the incantation [p. 18] as follows:

789 Oh, fine salt! Oh, chaste substance!
539 Your mother is free; your father, fine!
Incense the coverlet that protects you from shoulder pains!
Incense the chicken lest it eat and die!

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[794] [1] [The *'Ashūrā'* is a Moslem fast day (voluntary) observed on the tenth of the month Muḥarram. The sacred character of this date has already been referred to above, Part I, p. 84. Tr.]

Incense the mattress [*ṭurrāḥa*] that brings you rest !
Incense the spoon from the eye of Muṣṭafā's mother !

Then he says :

My incense is fine stuff from the eloquent Prophet !
My incense is such and such from Our Lady (Zainab) ![1]
My incense is bewitched from Sīdī Barka.
My incense is received from Sīdī Madbūlī.[2]
My incense is Jāwī from Sīdī 'Ashmāwī.
Sindīs, oh, Sindās ! Oh, Mursī ! Oh, Abū'l-'Abbās ![3]

Then he returns to the beginning and says :

Lo the eyes of the maiden are like cutting swords ;
And the eye of the baker is hotter than fires.
Lo, the eyes of the water-carrier bring healing from Allah.
Lo, the eyes of the girl are hotter than a javelin ;
But the eyes of the lad are more protective than a coat of mail.
Lo, the eye of the carpenter is sharper than a nail.
And the eye of a woman is keener than a scythe.
The eyes of a neighbour, fascinating and fickle,
Act with complete deception, saying :
Thou, oh, my neighbour ! wast praising Allah and grateful.
So remove the accursed thing from the home of this poor woman
That leaves her mourning.
Destroy the palaces and populate the graves.
I have incensed this basket from the eye of [p. 19] the mother of Ḥanna.
I have incensed these steps from the eye of the mother of Sālim.
Incense these mice lest they take the bread and send it to neighbours ![4]

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[1] [Granddaughter of Muhammad. Tr.]
[2] [Well-known local saint in Cairo. Tr.]
[3] [Saint in Alexandria. Tr.]
[4] [The interpretation of these rhymes is largely conjectural, if not sometimes impossible. The Arabic text which is unvocalized is an unsatisfactory attempt to render the Colloquial Egyptian doggerel in terms of the defective Arabic script. See plate 4. Tr.]

789 Such people keep on mentioning in detail all the possible things which are to be found in dwelling houses, pretending that all that year no misfortune will overtake the thing whose name is mentioned in this incantation. Strange to say the common people are not the only ones who believe in the imaginings of these devils, but many people of rank also, whom we would think above such futilities. It may be that the experience of the future will erase from the mind all the vain beliefs of the past, for often they were purveyors of destruction, and a means of ruin and mischief.

VII

A "MIRACLE"

755
231 ONCE in the provinces I heard a crowd asking a man, a poor *fellāḥ*, about the welfare of his buffalo. He said that it was "cured." I asked concerning the ailment and the curative drug. The man said: For two days the buffalo was yielding milk and blood. So I asked Rūma (an "old wife" of the village) about this question. She advised me to carry a halter of the buffalo at dawn [p. 20] and bury it in a forsaken grave, and, a little before morning, fetch it without anyone seeing me. I did that and the buffalo was "cured."

We hope that our brethren the veterinary surgeons will give us the advantage of the effect of this "remedy." We do not wish to enter into the medical treatment of animals, since they are more knowledgeable than we are regarding it, and to them may there be much gratitude and abundant praise!

VIII

MEASLES AND THE ALEXANDRIAN SHIRT

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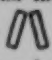
292 THE *fellāḥīn* are in the habit of "curing" their children, who are smitten with measles, by clothing them in a shirt of

776 "our brothers and sisters beneath the earth," but they are separate beings from the *aḳrân* (pl. of *ḳarîn*), though the two communities are in touch with each other.

The *aḳrân* are believed to be of different colours, some being white, some black; their looks also vary, as some are beautiful and some are ugly. This belief is easily accounted for, as each peron's *ḳarîn* is a facsimile of him or herself, and doubtless the colours are racial distinctions. The *aḳrân* are not, I believe, always malevolent, though stories of their mischief-making propensities are commoner than accounts of their good deeds.

Not only do the *aḳrân* resemble their prototypes on earth in person, but also in character—in fact, they faithfully reflect in themselves all the actions, both good and bad, of their earthly duplicates. Thus, if a man or woman gets into a temper, his or her "double" does the same; if they suffer pain and sickness, so also does his *ḳarîn*, or her *ḳarîneh*. This point was brought out clearly one day last year when a large number [124] of women had come to see me and to have their eyes doctored. One of them was speaking about her *ḳarîneh*, so I said, "But your eyes are very bad now, what about those of your *ḳarîneh*?" "Oh," she replied, "her eyes are also bad." "Poor thing," I said; "but who is looking after her eyes?" "Why, your *ḳarîneh*, ginab es-sitt," the woman immediately answered.

776 578 789 The following is another example of the intimate connection between a human being and his or her "double." When an argument begins between two or more men or women and a mischievous bystander wants to lead them into a real quarrel, he will take two bricks and place them together thus— , or he will take off one of his shoes and place it on the ground upside down, *i.e.* with the sole uppermost. This will make the disputants quarrel violently, and finally they will resort to blows. As soon as the bricks are taken apart, or the shoe replaced on the foot of its owner, the quarrelling will stop. My informant himself had witnessed an experiment of this kind. A friend of his, seeing two men arguing in the cultivation, placed one of his shoes, sole upwards, on the ground. The disputants immediately started a violent quarrel, hitting out and striking each other. Then the friend replaced the shoe on his foot, and at once the quarrel ceased.

The belief is that when people start quarrelling their *aḳrân* come up above the ground and quarrel too. They are, of course, invisible, but they see the bricks or the shoe, as the case may be, and as long as the bricks remain together, or the shoe remains on the ground, they will continue to fight. As long as the *aḳrân* quarrel, the people to whom they belong must quarrel too.

776 123 787 [761] [791] Again, a man's *ḳarîn* marries the *ḳarîneh* of his wife, and when a man or woman dies, his *ḳarîn* or her *ḳarîneh* dies also. I had been informed of these facts several times, and the reality of the belief was brought home to me in the following way. An Egyptian friend of mine died last year, and I was sitting with his wife one day after his death, when a woman magician came to pay us a visit. I suggested a *séance*, whereupon the magician seated herself in a corner of the room and asked for a blanket

/80 cont'd/

Nowadays there are some women who perform the Zar-ceremony 755
(1) merely for fun or with the aim to get money or presents from their 789
friends and relations. (2)

2. The Kūdiya or Shaikha:

In most cases the Kūdiya is a woman, rarely a man. Kūdiya with 791
dark complexions are preferred, because it is believed that the most 756
clever Kūdiya are Sudanese. In our terminology the Kūdiya may be [787]
described as the medium between the possessed person and the spirits.
By her knowledge and ability, which will be described later, she is
able to designate the spirit or /81/ spirits who entered the patient's 791
body. A specially favourable day for the soothing of the spirit is fixed 755
and special offerings made. The amulets (Arabic: Hegab, pl. ahgeba) [777
and the clothes the patient must wear during the ceremony are deter- 751]
mined. From the day the Kūdiya is called by the patient until the
day of the ceremony she supervises every step taken in this respect. [326
She has connection with the black-and goldsmiths and with the El- 759]
'Attar (plant and drug-dealer).

The Kūdiya herself is supposed to be possessed by all kinds of 791
spirits and she wears all respective amulets. Once every year she per- [787
forms a big ceremony for all these spirits. It takes place in the month 751
of Ragab and is the closing ceremony of the year. During the follow- 796]
ing two holy months of Islam Shåban and Ramadan no Zar-ceremony
may be performed. Apart from the big annual ceremony, she makes
a small Zar approximately twice weekly as treatment for her patients. [755]

The Kūdiya's position is hereditary; if she has no daughter to
succeed her, the post will be passed on to one of her assistants. [428]

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(1) It is mostly uncultured rich women who do this for fun and spend a great deal of money on it.

(2) The social usage obliges a woman even nowadays in Egypt to give [431
presents or money (called: No q tan) to her relatives or friends 585
on the occasion of marriage-, birth-or Zar-ceremonies. They, 846
in turn, are obliged to repay her if she performs any such cere- 787]
monies.

/85 cont'd/

The Kūdiya and her followers stay overnight. About 10.00 A.M. 755
the next morning the possessed woman takes a bird or fowl in her 782
hand, or rides on a goat, sheep or camel, thus establishing physical
contact with the animal to be sacrificed, then she walks seven times
round the offering table. If she is too ill to do so, the Kūdiya will [801]
pass the birds or fowl seven times over the patient's head. During this
procedure the drums are beaten, incense burnt, and "Sagharid", i.e. [198]
joyful shouts, uttered by the women. They are produced by putting
the tongue between the lips, moving it rapidly and uttering shrill
vibrating shouts.

Then the Kūdiya or one of her assistants kills the bird or other 751
sacrificial animal near the table, the animal's blood is carefully 755
collected in a porcelain or ceramic plate, into which the amulets 782
and a round silver piece are placed. The silver piece bears on one 789●
side the following inscription: "Due to the permission of the daughter
of the king of the earth." On the other side is written: "Oh my
masters be content with me!" This silver piece is called "Eia-El-A'
qd" or pact, i.e. treaty between the possessed person and the spirit.
The patient will then be smeared with blood on the aching parts.
The sacrificed animals are cooked, with the exception of their intestines, heart and liver.

In the afternoon the patient is bathed wearing amulets and 755
jewelry. She then enters the hall in a majestic procession while the 782
music plays and sits down beside the offering table. The hall is well
prepared; all furniture is cleared away, mats are put on the floor
and cushions placed along the wall for the guests. The Kūdiya and
the musical band sit near the center wall. In the middle of the room
is the offering table. When the patient sits down to it, the Kūdiya
uncovers it. Three, five or seven ladies who had performed a Zar [801]
before, give the patient three pieces of bread with sour milk and one [262]
piece of cooked intestines. The patient eats this while the women
will say: " 'Afia we bourhan" (health and proof) (13). The offerings

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(13) It means apparently: "You have fulfilled your obligations towards the spirits, let this Zar contribute towards your recovery and be it a proof of your loyalty."

70.

Pangs of Spring.

x539 Dialogue between a girl, named Nefīse (ll. 3–4), and her lover (ll. 1–2).

Rummān ig-genāin yaḫḍar
u-rummānik, ya Nefīse, ṭāb.
U-Nefīse, rāshe betūgaḥha;
fi-ʿurḍak tiktib-li ḥegāb.

"The pomegranates of the garden are green,
And thy pomegranates, Nefīse, are ripe."
"And Nefīse's head aches;
Have pity on me, write me an amulet."

2. Compare No. 110, note on l. 6.

3. Of course from pangs of love.

4. Such amulets usually consist of a little piece of paper, bearing Koran verses, folded and sewed into a little leather bag. Almost everybody wears one or more such amulets. [789]

Here the "write me an amulet" is, of course, only a circumlocution.

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000 their daring to be visible to a distance. The people on the
541 festival ground take up their positions in a number of circles,
in the centre of which performers of all sorts show themselves.
Here a silver-haired wise woman or female sheikh
538 sings rousing religious hymns; there the listening people get
231 stories of genii and of heroes told to them; here the monkey-keeper
puts his red-buttocked baboon through his performances,
making him show "the maiden's sleep and that of the
old wife, the walk of the thief," &c.; there a group of improvisators
are bawling and clapping their hands, ready at a
538 moment's notice to make a verse for and upon every new
comer. Elsewhere a buffoon is giving amusement by his
522 gestures in theatrical representations, and his wit, which is
536 coarse, generally obscene, and exceedingly personal. A juggler
789 stuffs his mouth full of cotton and draws out endless
ribbons instead. These he winds up together, then shuts them
into his magical box, opens the box, and discovers it to be
empty. He then summons the magic spirit to his assistance by
237 blowing a large shell (generally that of *Tritonium variegatum*),
opening the box again and a large serpent crawls out of
it. In the meantime he goes through all sorts of antics with his
boys and assistants. One of these robs him, but the thief is
discovered and condemned to death. The juggler bares the
culprit's belly, into which he forcibly thrusts a dagger, and
in order that death may be certain, he withdraws and inserts
it several times. A stream of blood spurts out, and the performance
is too real and horrible for some spectators. The
corpse is covered up, the magic shell is blown, the spirit
awakes the boy, who gradually moves his limbs, and soon
jumps about as merry as before. The handle of the dagger,
as the police have learned, is hollow, and the blade is pushed
up into it when brought into contact with the skin, while at
the same time a bladder applied to the dagger gives out a
stream of blood-red beet-root juice.

796 On the morning of the festival itself, as upon all the great general festivals of Islam, town and people are decorated and dressed out, work is entirely at a stand-still, and the throng upon the main streets leading to the tomb of the saint is

special dainty on this day. Saturday is named "the Sabbath 796
of the light," from the celebrated sacred fire, which on this [778]
day bursts forth in the Greek Church of the Sepulchre at
Jerusalem, and on this account the Christian brethren there
annually get up a spectacle, which often terminates in deadly
blows and renders the intervention of the Turkish, and consequently
Mohammedan soldiery necessary. On this day
the Mohammedan faithful strengthen their eyes with eye-powders; [826]
everybody has a vein opened, or gets himself cupped,
a custom which prevails in many places in the West also, and [757]
in Egypt, Mohammedan as it is, coloured Easter eggs are
also eaten. People take *kishk*, that is, a decoction of wheat
with sourmilk, boil it with eggs, and stick it with the [789] ●
coloured shells of the eggs above the doors to adorn the
entrance for all time coming and ward off spirits. On Easter
Sunday the "great feast of the Christians" (*'id en-nusâra*)
these hold a grand reception, with sherbet and holiday gifts, [574]
the Mohammedans in a friendly and neighbourly way call
upon the Christians as the latter did upon them during
Bairam. The Easter Monday of the Copts, whose festivals
are settled by the Greek calendar, is the universal spring [805]
festival for the adherents of both religions. The night before
onions, beans, and a bouquet of roses are laid under the bed-cushions [788]
and slept upon. On Easter Monday the onions are
crushed and stuck with some water on the door; the beans
are stuck on the bar, and the roses are used as a nosegay.
At the first streak of daylight everybody moves abroad, this
being the day of *shimm en-nezîm*, that is, "air-smelling," or
more poetically "sipping the zephyr." People go to the
gardens or other attractive spots, and pass, if possible, the
whole day there. At the most-frequented places sellers of [943]
coffee, sherbet, buza, and cooked meats establish themselves.
A company of friends may take an Easter lamb with
them, kill it at the rendezvous they have selected, and prepare
tanur, that is, they cut up the meat in several pieces [252]
and bake it in an improvised earth-oven; or they make
shawirma, that is, the whole lamb with the skin and hair on
is placed on a spit and roasted at the fire. The day is spent [521] [526]

844 ments the poor child of humanity till it sickens and falls
[776] into convulsions, which are therefore also called karina (see
[753] chap. vii.). Immediately after the birth the mother receives
melted butter with honey and fenugreek, and instead of
[262] fasting she must daily eat at least a fowl or a good piece of
meat, which her female friends and neighbours give her. On
846 the sixth day the mother in her turn sends these a plate of
kishk (decoction of wheat and sour milk) as a sign that they
are invited for the following day. Above the head of the
sleeping child is placed on this night a pitcher, hung with
● [789] gold coins and lighted with tapers, the pitcher being long-necked (*dorik*) in the case of boys, short-necked (*kulleh*) in
that of girls.

846 On the morning of the seventh day (*yum es-subû'a*) the
852 house is filled with female visitors. The child is placed upon
a sieve, tapers are fixed upon metal plates and on the point
of a sword, and the child is carried in procession through the
whole house, while the midwife scatters *bisele*, that is, wheat,
[782] barley, pease, and salt as provender for the wicked spirits.
[776] The child is shaken in the sieve, being thereby believed to
lose fear for the rest of its life, and its eyes are held up to
the sun to sharpen them. The cymbals and small drums,
the singing and trilling of the women, make the outer world
acquainted with the joy within the house. The guests present
[431] the mother and midwife with money and gold, for which
they distribute parched chick-peas, St. John's bread, and
[262] walnuts.

But the father must also keep the seventh day as a festival,
especially if the child is a boy, though in many cases he does
not dare up till this time to look upon his own child, since
he might possibly, and quite against his will, do some harm
to his tender offspring by a glance of his eye. He invites
his friends to a feast, and entertains them with Koran reading,
zikrs, and similar pious amusements, or sends for instrumental
players, singers, and dancing-girls. The son is brought in a
[431] sieve and shown to the guests, who rejoice with the father,
and perhaps also leave some gifts. A plate of candy-sugar
[553] is now sent to the kadi or some other theologian; he sucks